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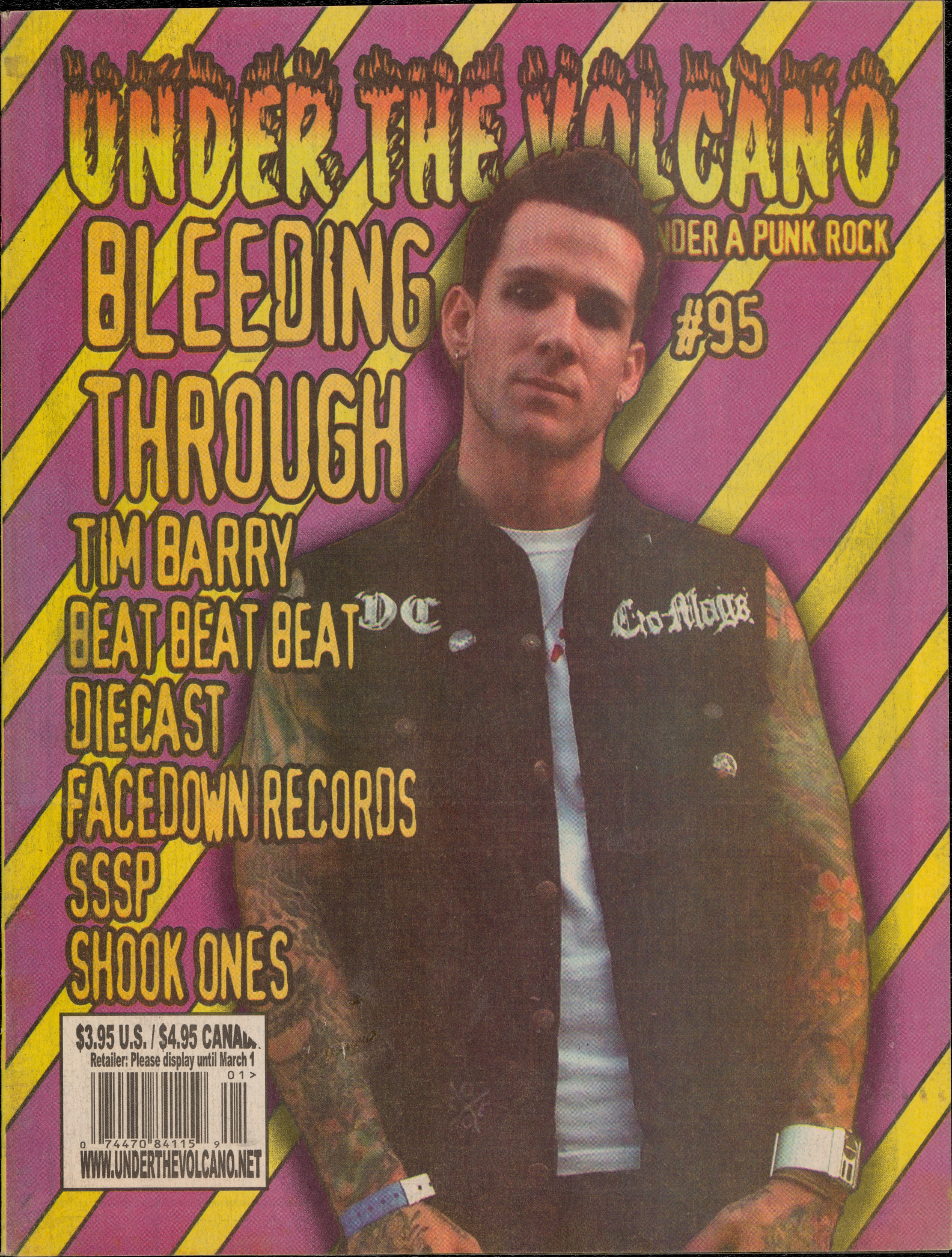


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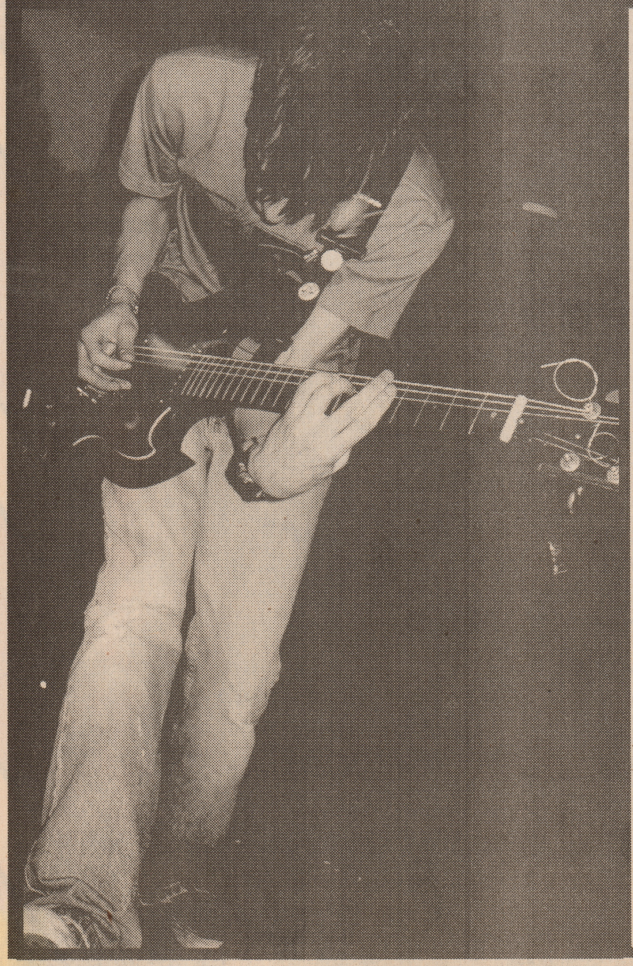

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## DISTRIBUTION

Under the Volcano is FREE on Long Island and sold around the country at independent record shops, online through sites like Interpunk or distros like Get Hip. Stores or distros interested in stocking UNDER THE VOLCANO should email boss@underthevolcano.net to arrange free drop offs on Long Island, or ask about cheap bulk rates for indie stores outside of Long Island.


# From the Editor Rich Black

I'm about three Sam Adams Cherry Wheats into Happy Hour. Danielle, a particularly cute server where I drink the majority of my beer, sidles up to the bar and hugs me.

"Here, Rich! YOU know about music--you'll appreciate THIS!"

She jams one of her iPod earphones into my ear. Suddenly, the servers balancing plates of hamburgers and hot wings seem to be grooving to the soulful sounds of Al Green singing "Let's Stay Together"...

*I, I'm so in love with you*
*Whatever you want to do*
*Is all right with me*
*'Cause you make me feel so brand new*
*And I want to spend my life with you...*

Danielle is hugging me, cheek to cheek. My head vibrates woozily as she adds her own vocal accompaniment to the track being piped into her other earphone from the iPod. As the song winds down, I realize that a rare, perfect three minutes in my life has just passed.

These are very strange times.

## WANNA SEND US AN INTERVIEW?

*Under the Volcano* is looking for high-quality interviews to publish. There is NO PAY involved. We like many genres of music, but Punk and Hardcore are generally what set our loins on fire, and we're ONLY interested in bands that have a CD available through national distributors. Email us first about your interview ideas. We'll require hearing the band first of course, and have some simple guidelines once you get the go-ahead. Remember, there are no guarantees—we're kind of dicks about the right "mix" of bands for a particular issue, and hafta REALLY like what a band is doing to run a feature. Please DON'T approach us about features on bands from Long Island, as we already have 'em covered.

## INTERNSHIPS

*Under the Volcano* is always looking for bright, motivated, and slightly masochistic people to create and or/fill unrewarding, unglamourous, non-paying intern positions (we are NOT looking for writers) in exchange for college credit! English, Communications or Marketing majors are encouraged to apply, and you DON'T have to live on Long Island. If ya wanna get involved, email a proposal detailing STEP BY STEP ideas for new programs or projects (including how you intend to implement them ) or however else you'd like to contribute to boss@underthevolcano.net with "INTERNS" in the subject header. Please also include a 300 word statement explaining WHY ya wanna work with *Under the Volcano*, along with your contact info.

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# Columns

The property manager replaced the old stove with a new one, rather than just simply replacing the part that was broken. Apparently that's the cheap and easy way of doing things.

There are some perks with a new stove, and some things that turn out to be a drag—for instance, the stove tops now work **too** well. The flame was so strong that I was sautéing my hand, which was 10 inches above the stove. I've become used to burning my skin at work, so much so that it wasn't until the beginnings of what amounts to a first degree burn on my fingers before I realized it wasn't the egg whites that smelled so yummy cooking; it was my groovy digits.

Around the corner from where I live is the hotel where Ginsberg stayed in '47. I haven't experienced any ghost sightings, though—and I probably mentioned this before—my neighbor upstairs experiences poltergeists, and then tries to rid her apartment of them by chasing them with a hammer. My buddy's girlfriend came home once around four in the morning, and she witnessed the genius in the hallway, smashing her front door with a hammer. The tenant explained in the most serious tone what she was doing. Geesh... and I thought she was hanging art all the time!

Kerouac was in this city for a few years, then split; I was held up by a 12 month lease. The romantic vision collapsed, and then the truth was nothing but the truth—same shit, different generation. Another Lawn Guyland drowning in the sauce, swimming in the same puke-filled pool of the unadulterated moment. Some chick asks me if I wanna buy a bag of weed while a homeless cholo nonchalantly pisses into one of the decorative fountains in Civic Center Park, which some of the other drunks drink from during the week. It doesn't matter, really; this place has already been better documented by famous dead guys with better publishing deals than yours truly.

I'm two steps away from being broke... or more so, a little less than 2000 miles from being broke. We're moving back to the East Coast, and once I get settled, my funds should be around the ballpark figure of ZERO. So, I guess this is where I find out how much of the reading and studying I've been doing pays off. The security was only imaginary, strung together by a few thousand dollars; it's gone, where am I now?

Before I left Long Island, my computer guy, Carter, hooked me up with a copy of the now off the market DVD duplicator called DVD Copy X. It works with most DVDs, though newer DVDs now have encryption written by a smarter bunch of people. But, I have to say the program has been quite handy—I break even on Netflix. I figure that if the industry continues to rerelease another special enhanced DVD version of some movie that's already been reissued to DVD twice, I'm not going to participate in this nonsense and continue to buy DVDs. There are also two new digital formats that haven't been settled on by the industry as "the" standard, so I'm not going to buy any more DVDs. I'm going to copy every one that I can.

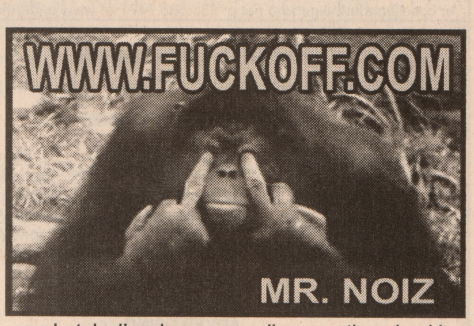
I stepped into some chain store, and they actually had *Under the Volcano* on the shelf, which is one of the few times I've seen this zine somewhere other than on the floor of a Long Island record shop buried underneath show flyers. It felt kinda weird, but regardless of the store, they stocked some cool graffiti and stencil art zines. The stuff was total DIY, explaining how to make wheat paste flyer art, what kind of paint caps to use, where to buy 'em and which paint runs less. It was really exciting, since I'm used to the more exclusive rant and raver zines written by people who are more jaded than my fat ass (if that's even possible). I know, I know... I'm projecting, and not really depicting anyone other than that howling demon in my brain. But *A Day In the Life*, and *PEEL* magazine are cool as fuck.

It's not all gloom and doom. I have a great girlfriend, Melissa, who's okay with a bunch of zeros in the bank accounts. We're plotting on how to skip town and the $40 worth of traffic tickets that the meter maid hit us with. We figure we'll wait 'til the collections agency figures out where we're living. They'll have enough address changes to keep their asses busy.

Through a series of coincidences—or perhaps something cosmic—Melissa is someone that I used to discuss zines, Punk Rock and Hardcore with when I was 15 or 16 (she used to publish the zine *Remote Exile*, which I always thought had nicer printing than *Watching Sister Vomit* ), and here she is again more than fifteen years later. We became reacquainted in a city that was over 1700 miles from where we first met, still chasing after similar ideals. I don't know if anyone else can appreciate it, but if you're lucky enough to have experienced that—or to eventually experience that—make sure you're smart enough to enjoy it.

So, the boxes are being packed, the road map is being reread, and yours truly will be heading back east, this time to East Providence, Rhode Island. I figure it should be a nice little place to be broke and stranded. If all goes as planned, I'll be back doing social work and not grilling my hands. There's a place where I can take up qigong once I get some cash.

Even though I'm dreading carrying that sofa up three flights, it's all going to work out for the better. Always remember, there's someone who's hurtin' more than you are.




Lately I've been spending my time hacking my cell phone. It isn't the easiest thing to do, but once it's set up on your computer, it's very simple to copy songs to your phone for ring tones, get pictures off your phone without being charged to send them, and even change some of the system images to make the phone more personal, as well as removing the phone provider's logo. I have a RAZR phone and basically googled "hack the RAZR," which brought me to a really cool site: www.hacktherazr.com. You can also find instructions on how to set up free web browsing via cell through this site.

I've also been using a web application that lets me view my files across the web, or, as they call it, "webcasting." The Orb is the name of the application, and it has nothing to do with the Dance/Trance band of the same name. You can download this application at www.orb.com. One awesome feature I'm able to cash in on is the ability to watch television via webcasting, which is possible if the application detects a TV card on your PC that you can load it on.

**LOATHSOME PEOPLE**
**(with a hint of vitriol)**

I try not to judge other people. Really. You may even say I follow the Word of the Lord... "Judge lest ye be judged," and all that. There are times, though, when I just give up making excuses and think that some people are simply incorrigible and—though they may not be separated from society by say, prison—they'll get their comeuppance because the laws of the universe and the delicate balance of harmony has it pre-writ.

Recently, Ted Haggard, Senior Pastor of The New Life Church, President of the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE), a mega-church umbrella for 43,000 congregations, was "outed" by a male prostitute. The call-man fag went public about his and Ted's three year gay sex-

relationship, which included Mr. Haggard's use of Crystal Meth. Apparently he had seen Mr. Haggard, a proponent of the constitutional ban on gay marriage, on television denouncing gay marriage and just couldn't stand to watch.

The obvious response is to denounce the man and other right-wingers like him, like say Limbaugh and O'Reilly (two loathsome fucks) because they think of themselves as elitist. They believe they're above law, opinion and the very morés that they promote in the purpose of self-aggrandizement.

Rudy Giuliani is said to be assessing his chances if he were to run for President in 2008. I can't think of someone with more on the self-promotional agenda. As far as his political agenda, he will fail. He was never good at being diplomatic, a necessary skill in politics. Neither party really likes him. As a matter of fact, I can't think of anyone who actually likes the man.

A few years ago, Dick Cheney, loathsome like the dark side of the force, turned his nose up at you, me and every citizen of this country when he cited executive privilege because he didn't wanna share the minutes from his energy industry task force meetings. To make it even worse, when the Senate held a hearing with major oil execs to figure out why gas prices were skyrocketing, the execs were allowed to forgo truth of oath (how did that happen?) and when asked individually if their companies were represented at the hearing, they all responded "no," when they actually were. These greedy, gluttonous fuckers are a plague to society. I don't necessarily believe in the death penalty, but I **do** believe in karma, and a sin against a whole society is pretty big.

Unfortunately I'm tortured by the interaction with loathsome people in my daily life, not just by my detached assessment of the headlines. It took me a long time to realize that junkies were just walking ghosts, and you really shouldn't waste your time trying to empathize with the lot in life that may have brought them to this point. When I lived in Manhattan there was this red-faced slag that used to pass out in the three foot vestibule between the street door and the building door, so that I was forced to yell and kick at her so I could get into my building. I once walked out and she was squatting in front of the door takin' a drizzlin' junkie shit. Now, sometimes outside of the bar I work at in Brooklyn, the local crack skank mumbles bullshit at me because I won't give her money.

I'm sure when we're judged at the pearly gates, there will be a degree of forgiveness in relation to our situations, but there will also be atonement. I was once behind a guy in my local deli who distracted the counter guy so he could reach up behind the counter and grab a pack of smokes. He knew I saw him, and though I didn't say anything at the time, I've seen him in the neighborhood since and he avoids eye contact....because he knows I know. He's marked forever, the loathsome bastard.

I started a new job last week. It's about an hour drive from my house, and the hours I work allow me to sit in a ton of traffic on the Long Island Expressway to and from work. During rush hour the wheels in my head are turning faster than the ones on my car. I think about how I've evolved over the last few years. I guess it's natural progression, but I feel like as the years pass I just get lamer and lamer.

I remember a time where nothing mattered but hanging out with my friends, finding new records, figuring out new and inventive ways to get out of school, and all things related to that. Now that I have to be this "adult," things are really changing and it's hitting me hard.
These days all I do is work, and when I'm not working, I'm sitting at home watching movies or something equally tame. I feel like the only time I ever really leave my house is when there's a band playing. To top it off, I make sure I'm home Thursday nights from eight to eleven just to watch three lame shows on ABC. Worse than that, I've even been spotting crying during a few episodes! I still don't remember when I became such a wuss!

All of this thinking has definitely helped me to realize that I need to start getting out more again. I wanna hold on to my youth before I lose it entirely. It might not be a bad idea to reevaluate your own life, because it's so easy to get caught up in the rat race and lose touch with the small things that can really make you happy...do it now, before you end up being old and miserable!

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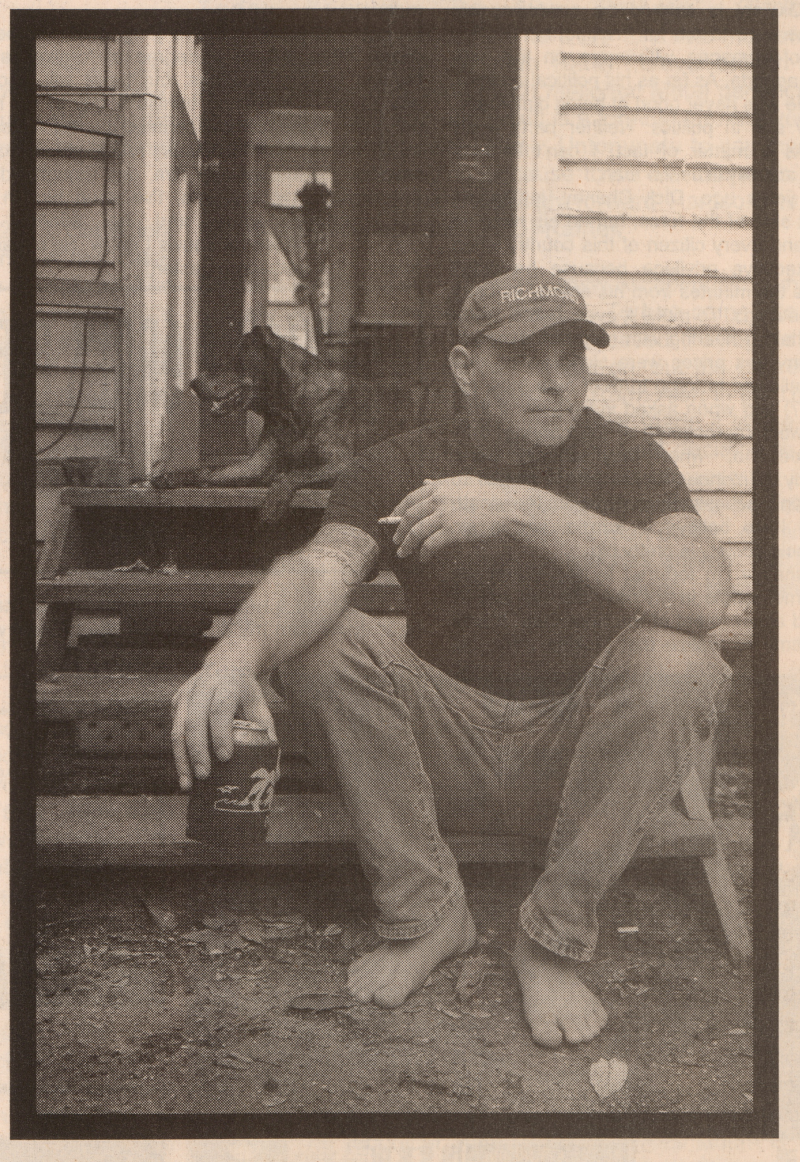
# TIM BARRY

## DAN MCCLERNON



Some artists are so versatile that whether they're playing fist-pumping, anthemic Hardcore or laid back Folk, they can stir the same kind of emotion in their listeners, making them believe that they can conquer the world one moment, and hide from the world the next. Tim Barry is one such artist.

Better known in music circles as frontman for Richmond, Virginia Hardcore pioneers Avail, Barry takes a decidedly different approach on his debut solo full-length, **Rivanna Junction** [Suburban Home], documenting what Southern life is all about to a soundtrack that would appeal to any fan of Johnny Cash or Hank Williams. On **Rivanna Junction**, Barry shines as a street poet who's learned about life by traveling the dusty, open roads that make up our country. While I've previously interviewed Barry in connection with an Avail release, I was very excited to find out even more about what makes him tick, and perhaps learn a little more about the man who continues adding more and more records to my collection. Enjoy!

Under the Volcano: So Tim, between holding down a real job and touring the country non-stop with the influential Hardcore act Avail, how the hell did you find the time to write--let alone record--a full-length album?

Tim Barry: I suppose I just refuse to slow down. I can't NOT be doing something. To begin with, I work at the Richmond Ballet as a production assistant. Ballet is seasonal, much like school. That means I'm free most of the summers. I work as much as I can to save money to fuck off when I get the chance. In fact, I'm on tour with the ballet right now. I worked just under 80 hours this week. But that gives me the money later to focus on nothing but writing, touring, riding trains, drinking and living. In other words, I find the time to do it all. Hopefully I always will, because all those little pieces make me feel complete. But, my I don't live life in a rush--I just keep myself busy with living.

UTV: You've been singing for Avail since 1991. How long has the itch to record a solo record been brewing in you?

Tim Barry: I had never really had the itch to do a solo album. Not unlike Avail, all of this is an accident; when Avail started we never anticipated anything. It all just sort of fell into place--with a lot of hard work--and one day we realized that some people liked our band.

With this solo music, I simply had a handful of songs I'd been writing off and on that didn't really fit with Avail, and one summer I decided to head on down the street to a friend's studio and throw them down. I handed out those songs as *Laurel Street Demo* to friends and family, and some folks who were interested in the music through Avail. At the time it was just a CDR I would burn on my housemate's computer--oddly enough, I still have no computer, cell phone, iPod or any other convenience like that. Down the road I released *Laurel Street Demo* on a German record label called Dancing In the Dark Records. From there, Suburban Home invited me to do a full album on their label, and that's the album that just came out called *Rivanna Junction*. So, now I'm gonna focus on the solo stuff a little more. I'll be touring more on my own, and hopefully will record another album before the end of the year.

UTV: What are the differences you've seen now in regards to writing a solo record as opposed to writing tunes for Avail? Did you try and approach the task in a same way? Was subject matter approached differently, etc., etc.?

Tim Barry: Fist of all, I should make clear that Avail writes collectively. There isn't one songwriter in the band; we all contribute. It's a popular misconception that the singer in bands do most of the song writing; that's not the case with Avail. But, to answer the question, I don't have a format at all for writing words or music--it always just comes out. I get a chord progression, or line or phrase or vocal pattern in my head and just go for it. It's hard for me to explain the way I write. It's just an inherent part of my life, like walking, eating, drinking beer and so on.

UTV: Did you feel any added pressure on yourself to write a great record due to: A) the amazing track record of Avail, and B) as a solo artist, you are held accountable for everything and anything that goes into your own record?

Tim Barry: No, because I don't write for anyone but myself; it's therapy for me. And that stands for Avail as well. I have a piece of crap old Tascam 4 track recorder in my room that records to cassette tape. I just sit up there alone when I'm in the mood and get shit off my mind. I can only write about things I'm close to, so I write for myself first. I feel really lucky if some people enjoy the songs. But, I know that anyone who does music, art, writing--or what have you--should never expect everyone to like everything they create. I just feel lucky that some people are into what I put out.

UTV: Can you explain the significance of the album title a little bit?

Tim Barry: I live in a neighborhood in Richmond, Virginia called Oregon Hill. It sits on a hill over looking the James River. At the foot of the hill are two CSXT mainline train tracks that run east west, paralleling the river. The tracks carry freight trains between West Virginia and Portsmouth, Virginia. That set of tracks from Richmond to West Glaston Virginia is called the Rivanna Subdivision. I spend most of my free time down there camping, hanging with friends and getting alone time between the tracks and the river. It is quiet. It is disconnected from the city. It seemed a fitting title, because like music, it's a place that I feel a sense of peace and relief. Not to mention, many of the songs ideas on the record were conjured in that area.

UTV: What made you decide to release *Rivanna Junction* on Suburban Home? Due to your relationship with Fat Wreck Chords through Avail, did you consider approaching them to release the record?

Tim Barry: No, I chose to just go off on my own and do my own thing. I talked to a handful of labels, but wanted to keep this record more organic and real. I'm not saying Fat ain't organic and real, but I wanted to be more low-key and not use Avail too much to get things rolling. Suburban Home has turned out to be the right choice; they're so on top of it and so down to earth that I feel already like we're family. We've had a chance to spend a lot of time together and my touring partners Caitlin--my sister--and Josh Small have all really connected with them as well. In a record label I look more for honesty and being real with one another, more than I do big distro deals and money.
UTV: For *Rivanna Junction*, how did you go about recruiting musicians to record for it? Also, I noticed that some of your family played on the album. Is this a first for the Barry family?
Tim Barry: It surely is not the first time I've played music with members of my family, but it is the first time we've done a recording together. And it was a great time. My brother James played on a bunch of tracks, doing keys parts. As I just mentioned my sister Caitlin--who plays violin on the record--also tours with me. But recruiting people in general wasn't hard--folks around here are tight nit. We all play on one another's records, have jam sessions at our houses, and share song ideas--that's normal.

What I did though, which is abnormal, is didn't rehearse any of the songs with the musicians before we recorded--I let them wing it. I love improvisation sometimes, and I think it worked on this album. Plus, the folks who played on *Rivanna Junction* are thousands of times more talented than I'll ever be. That definitely helped the process.
UTV: The album seems to really focus on personal relationships and the life of the blue collar worker down on his luck. If you had to break it down into percentages, how much of the subject matter would you say is autobiographical as opposed to romanticized versions of stories you've heard or the lives of friends or family?
Tim Barry: Oh, I don't know if I could break it down into percentage. And my intent was not to make a "blue collar" style record, but I'm noticing the older I become and the more I work that that's all that I am--a shit worker living pay check to pay check, essentially. But I'll admittedly stray as far as I can from any "Country" or "blue collar" label--*Rivanna Junction* wasn't intended in anyway to come across as that. But if it has, it's because I'm writing about my own realities, realities that make me lucky enough to have goals outside of work--like working enough to save enough to not work. I'm not really gonna get into the lyrical content here too much, and just leave it up to the listener, but all of the songs are real. Some based on me, some based on experiences of friends.
UTV: One of my favorite tracks on the album is "Dog Bumped." Can you talk about this song a bit and would this one in particular fall into fact or fiction?
Tim Barry: Let's just say it like this: I was sitting down by the tracks and river--on the Rivanna--one night drinking by myself and thinking about some bad news I got. A childhood friend of mine had just gotten locked up for killing his sister's husband. I was very distraught about the situation, and had just been informed of all the details from one of his family members. I had the line "one quick minute got me 28 long years, I'd do it again I don't regret it, he laid his hand on my sister too many times when I was near and I shot him dead and I don't care," running through my head. I didn't even write the lyrics. They were just there, out of nowhere. So I packed up my beer, put out my fire and walked back home and recorded the chorus. As I worked lyrically further into the verses I realized I was getting too personal--exposing the person. So I went and switched up the story and some facts, and left it be.
UTV: On the whole, the one thing I'm most impressed by is your knack for storytelling, a trait that I think is most important in the Country/Folk/Blues genres, which I'd say is where *Rivanna Junction* falls into. How did you go about honing your skills to write a song like this, which is a tad bit different than going about breaking down your average Punk/Hardcore tune?
Tim Barry: Again, I just write by feel. That's just how I do it. I know no other way. On a side note though, a lot of people are calling this record "Country;" that seems odd to me. I don't think of it as "Country" at all. I really see it only as a Folk album. And you throwing "Bluegrass" in there actually makes a lot of sense to me. But, strictly "Country," that's weird.
UTV: On the whole, do you think most Avail fans or fans of Punk and Hardcore in general will be into *Rivanna Junction*? Do you think most Punk enthusiasts are open-minded enough to give it a shot or understand and appreciate where you're coming from with this album?
Tim Barry: I don't know; that's a good question. To me it's a perfect fit; it's all

the same three chords. Punk is just that with distorted guitars. Listen to any Bluegrass song that's cut sometime, add some fast drums and some chunky guitars and it's a Punk song. It all makes sense to me. But of course, tons of people will dislike it, and that's okay with me as well. In the end it's just music, nothing to get all ego-driven about. But, if some people enjoy it, I'll be real stoked.

UTV: I read that a while here in New York City, you somehow played three shows in one day. How did that come about, and furthermore, how did it go?

Tim Barry: My favorite part about touring solo is that I can just do what I want and when I want. The first day of a tour this summer I played a show up at the Knitting Factory in New York City. When we finished, my promoter/friend Jake said, "Why don't we all go down to CBGB's and play unannounced at a Lucero show that's going on?" I said yes, and we jumped into cabs and I got right up on stage and played a quick set. In the meantime, some of the folks who were doing a show that night at C-Squat invited us to head over there and play after This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb. At that point, my whole crew was so drunk it was insane. But we jumped back into cabs, watched the last couple of songs by This Bike at C-Squat and played without amplification on the floor. It was fucking off the hook, and worse in the morning. The first three days of that tour, we played six shows.

UTV: So what do you have in store for the near future? Is Avail gonna be keeping you busy or will you try and concentrate on playing shows in support of the new album?

Tim Barry: For now, it's all about work. I finish a tour with the ballet right at Christmas, then I head over to the West Coast with Avail in January. February, I'll be on the West Coast touring solo with Drag the River. I'm taking March off the road to help produce a Josh Small album on Suburban Home and work. Then I'm gonna do an East Coast solo tour in April. Then Europe solo in May. In between all that, I'll be writing a new album and we are still working on an Avail album. I'm not joking, I don't slow down for shit--"Ride Fast, Live Slow." Thanks again for the interview, I hope all is well. X

**WWW.TIMBARRYRVA.COM**

**Looking and sounding like a gang of scruffy, spiky-haired street urchins from the wrong side of the tracks of Atlanta, Georgia, Beat Beat Beat unleash a storming torrent of '77-style Snot Punk on their latest release, Living In the Future [Dirtnap]. It's the sound of searing buzzsaw riffs, petulant vocal tantrums, and helter-skelter white-heat rhythms spraypainted with a thick enough coat of hyperactive poppiness to give it all a crunchy-sweet, sugar-coated sheen. Punk Rock hasn't sounded this youthful, restless, and wild in years, so it is with great pleasure that I present to you Beat Beat Beat in all of their brash, chaos-charged glory.**

# BEAT BEAT BEAT

ROGER MOSER, JR.

Under the Volcano: Since appropriate introductions are invariably essential, please give the attentive *Under the Volcano* readership the lowdown on each member of the clamorous BBB crew and a brief history of the band to date.
Beat Beat Beat: This is the story of five real dudes: Josh [vocals/guitar], Warren [guitar/vocals], Mike [drums], Brannon [Frantic, bass], and Steven [guitar]... better known to the world as Beat Beat Beat. It all started sometime in 2004 when we created a musical time machine to discover bands you never heard of and go back in time and see all our favorite bands before they were fat and old. When we got back, a few of us started playing covers in the basement of the Frantic house. We just wanted to play music that sounded more like what we liked and less like what was going on then. We wrote a few songs and played our first show at that year's Die Slaughter Haus Shutdown at Neutron Bomb. Warren was the last to join, and things got dangerous. That's when we decided to take it serious and try and make it out of the basement.
UTV: Who or what musically shaped you into becoming a snotty, screamin'-demon punk rocker? And at what age did the cacophonous religion of Punk Rock first grab you by the testes and knock you for a loop?
Beat Beat Beat: Of course, it's different for all of us. For most of us, it was skateboarding and Black Flag when everyone else our age was busy making out and listening to Silverchair. Josh, Bison, and Brannon all went to the same high school, but Josh was too cool to talk to them. Stephen grew up in Atlanta, and his older brother got him into Punk when he was little. We all ended up living around each other and playing in Punk bands around Atlanta. Everyone has their own tastes, but it was mostly early American Hardcore that led us into all the different shit we like now.
UTV: How did Beat Beat Beat come to be the band's name? Were other monikers seriously considered? If you were forced at gunpoint to suddenly change the name, what would it then become?
Beat Beat Beat: We all had listened to The Jabbers for a while before we started playing together, but it was a German zine I bought that I thought would be in English; it wasn't. There was one page with all kinds of words on it, and in the middle of it, it said "beat beat beat." For some reason, it stood out. We never thought about another name, and if some jerk pulled a gun on us, we would get in our time machine, go back in time, and get drunk.
UTV: Is *Living In the Future* Beat Beat Beat's only recorded output? If not, what else has the band brashly unleashed on the general public?
Beat Beat Beat: Douchemaster released our *Cheap Time* 7" back in early '05, and we recorded a few songs to give out on tour, but we only made around 100 copies of that, so it would be a collector's item. In the future, CDRs are worth way more than records. We're recording a live set this Saturday for a 7" on Rob's House Records. Only 500 get pressed, so by the time this is printed, they might be gone.
UTV: What went into the writing and recording of the 12 infectiously savage songs on *Living In the Future*?
Beat Beat Beat: The songs on our album are about the general fucked-upped-ness of all our lives over the last few years. Musically, it's our own take of the shit we listen to as we heard it. We were sick of bands that didn't sound like what they claimed, but we didn't just wanna rip something off. We just play what we would want to hear.
UTV: Which of the three fundamental edicts of the Rock n' Roll lifestyle do you adhere most: sex, drugs, or Rock n' Roll itself? And why?
Beat Beat Beat: Riddle me this: If you had three kids, which one would you love the most, and why?
UTV: What has been Beat Beat Beat's most memorable touring experience as of yet? Please provide as many sensational dirty details as humanly possible, because it is always our hope to senselessly shock mainstream society out of its slumbering complacency.
Beat Beat Beat: Well, between the shows, DUIs, staples in heads, free drinks at gay bars, sleeping in jails/hospitals/tents/parking lots, face slapping, piss tasting, nudity, puke eating, shit talking, fights with Mexican wrestlers, public shits--and god knows what else--we could never say one thing to take it all. Most of our last tour with the Carbonas is on film, and our boy Rom Tamblin plans to put it out on DVD if you wanna see for yourselves.
UTV: When not on the road or in the studio, what is it that each of you do for a day job? And how do you amuse yourselves there in the skyscraper swamp of Atlanta?
Beat Beat Beat: I'm sure you've all guessed by now we're a bunch of drunks--or worse--so we won't get into that. As far as jobs go, Warren is a carpenter--like Jesus. Mike works at a thrift store and trains his pitbull Biscuit to fight smaller dogs. Brannon is an avid AA member and cooks food for a living. Stephen is a janitor in some high rise downtown. And as for Josh, well, let's just say he's sort of a rambling miscreant.
UTV: What does the foreseeable future appear to hold for Beat Beat Beat? And what are your personal aspirations for the New Year 2007?
Beat Beat Beat: We plan on touring Europe after we get out of jail, or maybe just move to Europe to avoid jail. Other than that, it's the same shit... writing new songs, having fun with our friends, and maybe some new tires for the time machine. X

**WWW.DIRTNAPRECS.COM**

**Bleeding Through came into town as part of a tour with Saosin and Senses Fail. I grabbed the opportunity to sit down with lead singer Brandan Schieppati and get some information about the band, their current album, The Truth [Trustkill] and what will be coming up next year. Brandan was one of the most genuine band people I've met in recent memory, and they put on a hell of a show that night as well. Here's what happened.**

*Photo: John McKaig*

# BLEEDING THROUGH

MYK

**Under the Volcano:** You guys come from Orange County, which has a really rich Punk Rock history...
**Brandan Schieppati:** Yes it does.
**UTV:** Do you find that the fact that you don't sound like any of those bands has helped you or hurt you?
**Brandan Schieppati:** Let's put it this way: I think that in the early '80s--when there was bands like The Adolescents, Social Distortion, Black Flag and all those bands from Orange County--there was also stuff in the early '80s like very sunny and very, you know, late '70's disco shit was going out. It was just a crazy kind of time, so they just were sort of the anti to what was going on at the time. Then when music started to evolve through Orange County, there was Punk Rock, and then it started to get really sunny. It started getting really sunny with bands like No Doubt and Lit and all those bands. Then there was an uprising of a lot of heavy music, so I think it again became the "anti" of what was normal. I think it actually really helped because it was so against what was so popular in Orange County at the time and that it stuck a nerve with people--because not everyone can connect with what Gwen Stefani has to say about fucking life. Nobody really wants to hear it anyway.
**UTV:** I hear rumors that there's going to be a vinyl version of the new album?
**Brandan Schieppati:** I hope, that would be great! That's the first I have ever heard of that.
**UTV:** I guess I beat you to the punch.
**Brandan Schieppati:** Cool. Then yes, there is going to be a vinyl version of the new album. I've been trying to get some vinyl pressed out of it because I never had a band other than 18 Visions that actually had vinyl pressed. I'm looking forward to it.
**UTV:** Since you brought it up, what led you to decide to leave 18 Visions and end your partnership with Throwdown?
**Brandan Schieppati:** At one point I was starting Bleeding Through--I was the only guitar player in 18 Visions and I was in Throwdown as well. Then Keith [Barney] from Throwdown-who's no longer in the band--Keith at the time started playing for 18 Visions as a second guitar with me, and I just decided to kill one of the bands. I couldn't give all my energy to one of the bands, I kind of had to concentrate my energy to other things, so I quit Throwdown to do all my writing in 18 Visions and Bleeding Through. Then, eventually, I went from being one of the sole writers in 18 Visions for about six years, to I would show up at practice and they wanted to go a different way. They had another vision; they had another dream and it wasn't my dream, and it wasn't my vision anymore. I started touring a little with Bleeding Through, and the sense I got from Bleeding Through was "Wow, this really means something." Getting up on the stage and playing, I feel something when I'm doing this, and the crowd feels something too. It was something I was never really accustomed to before. It was an easy weeding out process. I just feel that Bleeding Through, to me, was more in my heart and more my band, and more something that was meaningful to us.
**UTV:** You just got the chance to interview Danzig for *Revolver*. Aside from the obvious interview, what were your impressions of him?
**Brandan Schieppati:** Dude, I was so scared to fucking interview the dude, straight up. I've only heard that he was a big asshole, and then right before we went on--right before we did the interview--I got a call from one of my friends who said "You know what? I've met Danzig before a bunch of times, he's really fucking cool. But he has this knack of being able to see through really cheesy people, and if he thinks you're really cheesy, then he'll be a total fucking prick. But, if he knows that you're just like, a dude, then he'll be totally fucking cool." So I was like, "Great. I'm gonna get evaluated in like three fucking seconds by Glenn Danzig, to find out whether I'm cheesy or not." So he cruised up, he was really cool, shook my hand and he had a smile on his face, and said, "Let's go do this." We sat down at a table. I ate lunch with him for like, three hours, and I was just so shocked by how genuine of a person he is and how he's had a vision, and he had his way of doing things, and he stuck to it all these years. Like, "It's my way or the highway," and I really respect people like that. You know, he has a bad rap because he doesn't take shit from anybody. People who don't take shit and don't compromise get a bad rap for being an asshole, or whatever they want to call him. He was really cool, and he said some really cool things to me that I'll probably carry forever. It was awesome.
**UTV:** An extension of that is, you have a band called Die Die My Darling.
**Brandan Schieppati:** Yeah, it's just sort of a cover band that I do with a couple of the dudes from 18 Visions and Bleeding Through's manager, Ryan Downey, who sings. We've only played a couple of shows, since we're never all really home at the same time. Hopefully we'll be doing more shows because lately we get a lot of mail, website and MySpace traffic for it, and it's really weird. It just covers Misfits songs, and I kinda want to try and cover some Danzig songs as well.
**UTV:** Are you a Samhain fan as well?
**Brandan Schieppati:** I like Samhain as well.
**UTV:** Tell me a little bit about the new album artwork. You all have various parts of your bodies bitten off...
**Brandan Schieppati:** It's so funny because I really wanted to try and make this thing visually different than anything else that's been out there and my vision was just to try and make it really dark--black and white and stark lighting to it. Have things really somber about it. Then, the people that did the layout had this idea of creating holes in us and doing something different that way, and I was like, "Fuck yeah, I love it." I love it, and I think a lot of people get into it. It's really gory and you look at it and just think, "This is really fucking awesome." It looks real; they did a really good job on it. It's a shame that records don't sell anymore, because people will never see it or appreciate it. I think if it came out about five years ago, we probably would have sold more records just because of the layout.

UTV: What are the differences between recording with Rob Caggiano and Ulrich Wild who recorded *This Is Love, This Is Murderous*?
Brandan Schieppati: Ulrich was very new to our kind of music, because he's done bands like Static X, Deftones, he worked on that and Pantera's *Great Southern Trendkill*-which was cool, but his only glimpse into the world of really heavy, heavy type of music. So, working with him was cool because we were sort of new to him and he was new to us, and we sort of fed off these really new ideas. But, I think in the end it became a total clusterfuck. Our songs became too long, and there was too many parts. With Rob, he was just like, "You know what, you guys do this good, you do this bad. We're doing this, we're going to work on this and interject with that a little bit if you guys get better at it. I want to use the things that you guys do well, things I think you guys do well and trim the fat of your music." And that's what Rob did, really kind of like a drill sergeant for us. He was like, "You know what? I know you love this part, but it doesn't work. It just jumps out of nowhere and you can do without it." So, okay, we scrap it and keep going.
UTV: What do you see as the difference between being on a label like Indecision versus being on Trustkill?
Brandan Schieppati: They're both independent record labels. Indecision was a great label to be on; we had the opportunity to do whatever the hell we wanted, but he just didn't have the resources to kind of...we kind of started making leaps, and fell back behind a little bit with his record label. Things like, we wanted ads for our tours, we wanted certain things like that, and it just wasn't in his funds. And that was one of the hardest things we've to do was leaving that label, because Dave [Mandel], the guy who runs that label, is one of my closest friends ever. Trustkill was just a logical step as it was still an independent record label. We still got creative input, output and got to do what we wanted to, but there's just more backing to it.
UTV: You've played with bands like AFI, Avenged Sevenfold, Disturbed and now Senses Fail. An extremely wide range of bands…
Brandan Schieppati: And then there was Cradle of Filth...
UTV: Do you think the diverse crowd that you're now attracting has been harder to go over with, as opposed to playing to one singular type of crowd or fan?
Brandan Schieppati: You know what? I've always sort of prided Bleeding Through on being a band that people would think would only appeal to a certain type of kid, but we've gotten on these tours and done really well. I think with any band that sells over a certain amount of records, it can't just be that crowd, there has to be some kind of crossover. Then, when we headline it's a big, different group of people. It's like Punk Rock kids, metalheads, Hardcore kids, there's, like, Goth kids. And then there are girls that listen to like, fucking Justin Timberlake and Bleeding Through, and it's the most bizarre thing ever. I don't see the correlation, but it's just what happens. Everybody--no matter what kind of person you are--they kinda just find a little place for Bleeding Through if they get exposed to us. So that's what we try and do this tour off this record; we've done a headliner, we've done Ozzfest, the tour with Unearth--they're kind of the same tour. We really hadn't had an exposure tour, so when this one came up, we said, "Let's do it." There have been some naysayers, people saying, "Bleeding Through doesn't belong on this tour," and if last night was an indication of how this tour is going to be, we're going to be just fucking fine. Those people will shut up forever. I feel if there are kids watching us, we can make an impression.
UTV: What can you tell me about the limited version of *This Is Love…*? There's some extra stuff on it.
Brandan Schieppati: Yeah, there is like a glimpse, interviews about the lyrics, then there are three live songs and some behind the scenes footage.
UTV: Is there something like that for *The Truth*?
Brandan Schieppati: We are working on hopefully something for *The Truth*; the way I'm envisioning it, I want to do something like a short documentary and have it be more like a film. Really sort of artsy.
UTV: You briefly touched on Indecision. How do you feel the band has grown since *Portrait of the Goddess*?
Brandan Schieppati: With *Portrait…* it was weird, because I think that record is so unique and still stands out from our other records. Because we were so new to Bleeding Through...? The music that we were doing was so not being done that much before, so it was a chance. We wrote it and recorded it in like and were like, "Fuck, kids might not like that, but I love it so let's fucking do it!" Now, I think we've grown as musicians, and become able to formulate the Bleeding Through sound, which is sort of a bad thing and kind of a good thing because we're more professional about the way we write music. I kind of want to go back to the formula of *Portrait of the Goddess* for our next record, where I want to do things that I don't think anyone is doing. 'Cause let's face it, this market we play for--this Metalcore or Metal thing that's going around--people always asked me questions years ago, "Do you think it's going to get over saturated? Do you think it will be the new NuMetal?" I was always like, "No," but reluctantly, I was like, "I guess it might be." I think it's kind of reaching that point. I think only the strong will survive; the only way they can do that is by challenging themselves musically, and that's something I want to do on the next Bleeding Through record.
UTV: You have a DVD out called *Wolves Among Sheep*, it contains a lot of stuff, about five hours worth. If you could pinpoint one moment on that disc, what's your favorite?
Brandan Schieppati: My favorite part of the disc is in the extra scenes--when they're filming Chris Simms, who's one of our video directors. I don't know if you've seen it, but lightning struck and he was all like, "What the fuck!?" 'cause that dude is out of his mind, and for that to happen to him at that point was absolutely perfect. I love that part.
UTV: The current tour takes you up to December 21. What do you guys have planned for '07?

Brandan Schieppati: This tour is going to be the last tour for us in the States on this album cycle. After this tour we're taking a little bit of a break; Marta [Peterson, keyboards] and Derek [Youngsma, drums] are getting married, and I finally get to go on my honeymoon. In February we're going to Brazil, and then we're doing Japan. Then we go to Europe and the UK. Probably going to Australia one more time, and then hopefully do one of the summer tours, not Ozzfest this year, either Warp Tour or Sounds of the Underground, or something like Project Revolution. They're putting it together right now, I think it's something like Linkin Park, My Chemical Romance, and they want to throw a band like us in the mix, which I'm all for. It would be good.

Photo: John McKaig

UTV: You just recently came of tour with Unearth and Through the Eyes of the Dead, and you mentioned that's more of the directly Metal direct sort of tour. Do you find that when you have a bunch of bands that are similar, that it's detrimental on the crowd?

Brandan Schieppati: Yes. Kids get bored. I'll be straight up be honest. I think kids get bored when they see the same "like" band. With our last headlining tour, we brought Every Time I Die and Between the Buried and Me, and they were the fine line of being different enough to make it interesting for kids. This tour is great. A band like Bleeding Through and a band like Senses Fail and a band like Saosin-different bands. It's cool. Kids want to see it and kids want to hear it. It's how it was in the early '90s.

UTV: How does being on a show like *The Tonight Show* help or hurt you guys?

Brandan Schieppati: I don't know if it's done anything. It was cool just to say you've been on it, and a lot of people say it was kind of funny--they always see Bleeding Through as being this serious band. I guess it kind of shows that we aren't as serious as everybody thinks. But I don't know if it has really helped or hurt us--it was just something cool that we got to be a part of.

UTV: You donated a signed guitar to photographer Keith Kojira's daughter Rhiannon. For those who don't know what's going on...

Brandan Schieppati: She has Leukemia and I know there is one other type if cancer. They are just trying to raise money for her bills. As with a lot of people in this country, even if they do have health insurance, it's not gonna cover it. So it was just something cool that we got to do.

UTV: A lot of your songs seem to deal with a lot of broken hearts; is this all hypothetical or is there something that this all stems from?

Brandan Schieppati: It is something that this all stems from. You know, the songs all come from the same person. It stems from about a five or six year span from my life where I had to just deal with this over and over again. Little pieces would just keep reminding me how bad everything was, how I would finally get over something and it would interject itself back into my life. It's kind of just singing about going through bullshit, but having the power to get through it. I chose to write about it because a lot of bands helped me get through stuff like that on those problems and subjects, so that is why I do that. I want that emotional connection with the kids, and it's something I'll probably carry with me forever. I'm married and I will probably still carry a little bit of the scarring.

UTV: The new Trustkill comp came out, and there's an unreleased track. Where is that from?

Brandan Schieppati: We went in there and just recorded a couple of tracks. We kind of wrote that song pretty quick and put it out. We just had fun recording it.

UTV: I know a lot of bands end up with weird bonus songs on releases overseas because of the laws. For the kids here, are there songs they should be looking out for that you don't have here?

Brandan Schieppati: Fuck, man. We have a bunch of cover songs that we've done, and we're kind of just keeping them under raps because if we do do a rerelease of *The Truth*, if we want to do a bonus disc as well, we'd want to do a bunch of cover songs of bands we liked over the years. Like the Misfits, Unbroken and Black Flag, and stuff like that.

UTV: Last one. One of the guys in your band does the coolest thing I've ever seen. He does like a kick flip.

Brandan Schieppati: Oh, yeah, that's Ryan [Wombacher, bass].

UTV: The bass player. Where does one learn to do that?

Brandan Schieppati: Oh man, he's like a monkey. I don't understand. He can jump like a million feet in the air and he is like 5' 3". He's one of those little kids that's so flexible you can throw him down a flight of stairs and he'll just get up and say, "Alright, okay." But he kind of did it our first show we ever had him in the band, and the rest of us were like, "WHAT THE HELL DID YOU JUST DO?" It was cool, it just kind of stuck. X

**WWW.BLEEDINGTHROUGH.COM**

# diecast

## rich black

**Boston's Diecast has been slugging it out since 1997. The band's latest, Internal Revolution [Century Media], mixes Hardcore crunch with precise Metal licks and rapid-fire drumming as vocalist Paul Stoddard sings, growls and screams. I was able to ask Paul some questions about the band's recent lineup changes, the new record, and how he feels about letting the world peer into his soul.**

Under the Volcano: My understanding is that at this point, none of the original members of Diecast remain in the band. Is this true?
Paul Stoddard: Yes, they're all gone. The last two were Jeremy [Wooden, bass] and Jason [Costa, drummer]. Jason had a lot of issues in his life he needed to deal with, and Jeremy has a beautiful home and a beautiful girlfriend; it was just time for him to move on. We are still good friends, and they still are big supporters of the project. There is no "die" in Diecast...okay....maybe there is. But we still carry on!
UTV: Is it true that Jason left the band after an argument about Brendan Fraser?
Paul Stoddard: Fuck anyone who doesn't appreciate Brendan Fraser's acting skills! Just kidding. Jason Had a lot of issues he needed to deal with at home. Unfortunately, we think that he handled it the wrong way, but he's still a very dear friend of mine and I wish him the best. I'd also like to state that Brendan was great in *Bedazzled*.
UTV: How did you approach stepping into the position vacated by Colin Schleifer?
Paul Stoddard: With no worries or cares. I knew that they were going to like me or they weren't. Either way, I was going do the singing I wanted to do and be the best that I could be. I truly felt that I brought a lot more diversity to the table than they were used to, and that made us more dynamic. I take nothing away from what Colin had accomplished; he made some great shit. He did it his way, and now I do it my way.
UTV: Your first release with the band was 2004's *Tearing Down Your Blue Skies*. I feel that this record is far more cohesive in sound and tone, and that the performances far outshine those on the last record. How did you approach *Internal Revolution* differently, if at all?
Paul Stoddard: I totally agree. I just think that we are a much more mature band; touring and practice will do that. I also think that our producer, Paul Trust, grew as well. That, combined with that this was the second record I got to work with Paul on, our experience grew and our creativity expanded. That's how I want every record to be.
UTV: The lyrics for *Internal Revolution* point to you going through a major change in your life right now. Was there a particular event... or sequence of events... that might have precipitated your need for introspection and a new perspective? I feel it could be a broken relationship, but also that there's a lot more at work than meets the ear.
Paul Stoddard: There comes a point in every man's life where ha grows hair in funny places and his voice starts to change. But seriously, I did just get out of a four and a half year relationship-nothing makes better Metal than misery and sadness. That was definitely responsible for three songs. *Internal Revolution* is about the struggle within about how long I can do music. Time is ticking on any chance at having a family, and being able to do it right. All said and done, I regret nothing.
UTV: You've penned some of the most incredibly raw, emotionally honest lyrics I've heard in a long time. Are the lyrics actually as close to your inner being as I might think they are?
Paul Stoddard: Oh yeah. Four and a half years is a long time out of anyone's life . When you're in love, it doesn't get much closer to an inner being than that. I always try to write about things that I believe strongly in. That's when the passion pours out.
UTV: Whenever someone opens themselves up publicly...sometimes, even if *public* means to just one other person...there are fears of rejection, ridicule, or, maybe even worse, that your message might be completely misunderstood. How did you mentally prepare for *putting yourself out there* on this record?
Paul Stoddard: I don't think you can worry about that. If you start to worry about what other people think and let that influence what you write about, then your just selling yourself short. Music is supposed to be about expressing yourself and your opinions, no one else's. Believe in yourself and what you create through and through, or nobody else will.
UTV: Can you please touch on the song "Weakness" a bit, if not its specific content, by mentioning some of the things that you view as weaknesses in yourself or others?
Paul Stoddard: I wrote "Weakness" about the fact that take a few shots before I go on stage to loosen me up. I guess I was just too proud to admit that I needed anything to help me have a better show. I hate having any kind of dependency at all, but it always melts away any insecurities or nerves I may have before show time. I guess I might consider it a problem accept for the fact that I barely touch the stuff when I'm not on tour. I just chalk it up as my pre-game warm-up.
UTV: In the song "Out of Reach," you say that "the problem I have is me." Can you explain that a bit?
Paul Stoddard: I love the fact that you really listen to my songs! That song is about the desire to have what you can't even if what you may already have could be the best thing you've ever had. The reason I say that the problem I had was me was that I really new What I had was better but I still wanted what I couldn't have. I think It's human nature but I blamed myself because I thought I should know better.
UTV: Generally, do you feel it's better for things to end with a bang, or just fade away, and why? Personally, I kind of like the idea of explosions...
Paul Stoddard: It really depends. If it really impacts you emotionally, then even if it ends with a bang, it's going to take a while to fade away. Explosions definitely are fun, but sometimes it's just not that easy.
UTV: Do you know if the person this record seems to be addressed to has heard it?
Paul Stoddard: Oh yeah, she's heard it. I gave her an early copy. Maybe her hearing it was going to be therapy for myself. It did work out that way--it just made me feel worse, but forced the healing.
UTV: Let's try to end this on a positive note. Pretend it's a year from now...what changes have you made, what things have you accomplished?
Paul Stoddard: I look at relationships a lot differently. Too many people go out with potential partners feeling like they have to prove to this person that they're the right one for them, but I found out that that's going about it all wrong. People should be auditioning for you. That may sound selfish and egotistical, but you should never settle for less than what really makes you happy--whoever that may be--and if you do, you're just selling yourself and the other person short. Other than that, I feel like I've helped a lot of people out in a lot of ways through my lyrics and my songs, but what they may not realize is that they've helped me a lot as well.
What a great list of well thought out questions. Thanks, bro! X

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**Facedown Records is a label out of Sun City, California, that's released some of the most brutal Metal-tinged Hardcore in recent memory. Oddly enough, Facedown acts like Alove For Enemies and War of Ages have something in common beyond their affinity for blistering riffs and bone-crushing rhythms--a strong Christian ideology permeates their work. Facedown owner Jason Dunn answered my questions.**

# FACEDOWN RECORDS

**RICH BLACK**

Under the Volcano: Have you been in any bands yourself that our readers might know of?
Jason Dunn: In 1996 I joined the San Diego based band No Innocent Victim. They formed in 1992, and their original drummer actually taught me how to play. When he stepped down, I was asked to join. We did two records for a small label in San Diego and then did two albums on Victory. In November of 2005 we put out our newest record, *To Burn Again*, on Facedown. We aren't able to tour at all anymore, but we still do weekend shows and some regional dates.
UTV: Can I please get a brief history of the label? How did Facedown Records originally come about?
Jason Dunn: I started Facedown in December of 1997; next year will be out 10 year anniversary. Facedown was originally a distro and mailorder that I started in early 1997, then as I began to tour with No Innocent Victim, I met some great bands that weren't on labels, so I decided to give the label thing a shot. The label caught a good break early on, as a band called Overcome was dropped from Tooth and Nail and looking for a label. I had been friends with them for years, and they trusted me enough to put out a couple of records for them. I must give a lot of the credit to the Overcome guys; if we wouldn't have been able to put them out so early on, we would have had a much tougher start. Don't get me wrong, it was still a tough task to launch a label--and it's still not easy--but it helped having a known band on board early on.
UTV: How'd you come up with the entire vision of having a Christian label? What goals did you originally have in mind releasing bands like these?
Jason Dunn: When I joined No Innocent Victim, I was sending out a ton of packages to Hardcore labels. I was actually told by a few labels that they liked our music, but were not into the whole "Christian thing." Instead of sitting around and crying, I decided to start my own label that would give bands like us a chance. We didn't start like other Christian labels that only have their music in Christian bookstores and the Christian section at Wal-Mart; Facedown was to be a Hardcore label that focused on Christian-based bands. It was not to alienate anyone, but rather give a chance to the bands that might be held back by other labels because of what they believed in. This is still the vision today. The majority of our sales come from regular record stores, and we've never compromised our integrity to get ahead in the business. We were once offered a big distribution deal, but it meant that our records would be in the Christian/Gospel sections of stores like Best Buy, Wal-Mart, etc. That's not where we belong, so we refused it. Our bands are Hardcore bands, Metal bands, Rock bands--"Christian" should not be a marketing word to sell music or anything else. It's almost offensive to me as a Christian to see that taking place. Music is music, and Christian is not a genre. Got on a little rant there!
UTV: Does a Facedown band HAVE to be a Christian band? And, does it then follow that most bands on the roster are also Straight Edge? What do you look for in a Facedown band?
Jason Dunn: As I mentioned before, the vision and goal of the label was to be an outlet for Christian-based bands. Since I started the label, there have been more labels that are not against working with Christian musicians, but that doesn't change my focus. I would be compromising if I changed the direction of the label to try to sell more records or make more money. As far as Straight Edge goes, I personally feel like it can run hand in hand with my faith. Although I don't mark giant Xs on my hand, I still live a drug free lifestyle. A lot of the people involved with Facedown are straight edge. Some claim it, some don't. However it's not a necessity since you don't have to be sXe to be a Christian. As for what I look for in a band, I look for people that are great at the music that they play, have a strong work ethic, and morally don't portray Christians as hypocrites--there are enough people out there that do that. I want to have bands on the label that play great music and make people think about what they have to say, and back up what they say with how they live.
UTV: Does a Facedown band HAVE to be a Hardcore/Metal band, or would you release an electronic album by an artist whose philosophy was compatible with yours?
Jason Dunn: Facedown has always focused on underground music, whether that was Punk, Hardcore, Metal, etc. Last year we signed a band out of Kansas City called Flee the Seen that was a bit more Rock than we have done in the past. We also just signed a great band out of Canada called Means. These guys are incredible, and although they're a heavy band, they have more of a Rock feel to them. I'd say that if a band has heavy elements to them, then we would consider them for Facedown; it might not be Hardcore or Metal, but if it's powerful and has some great energy to it, why not? I personally do listen to all types of music though--heck, I'm listening to a Gregorian Chant as I type this!--so you never know. However, I do want people to be able to see the Facedown logo on the back of a CD and have an idea of what they're in for.
UTV: How many people currently work at Facedown, and what do they do?
Jason Dunn: There are currently seven of us, five on the label side of things and then we have two guys that do our screen printing for us. I handle all of the A&R, distribution, licensing, production and a dozen other things. My wife Virginia handles some sales, marketing, and all of our accounting, mail order, etc. Dave

Quiggle is our in-house art director, and his wife Shannon is our director of publicity. Bill handles all of our digital sales and marketing as well as a bunch of other stuff.
UTV: What's the difference between Facedown and Strike First Records? Is there a crossover between the two labels?
Jason Dunn: I started Strike First a few years ago after we had a band on Facedown break up before they even got a record out, and we already had time and money invested in them. Strike First is a way for us to work with younger bands without investing a ton of money into them. We give them a chance to prove themselves and get out on the road and tour and see what they've got. If bands work hard and are easy to work with, then we can bring them up to Facedown where they get some added benefits over a Strike First deal. It's set up as an artist development company and has really proven successful with bands like War of Ages, Inked In Blood, and Alove For Enemies, who all actually started on Strike First and worked real hard for us.
UTV: It seems that a lot of the bands on the roster are plagued by lineup changes. Do you have any explanation for this?
Jason Dunn: Our bands have their fare share of member problems-it's definitely not just our bands though. It seems like I see something about member changes online almost every day in various bands. I can't say the definite reason for that, but I feel like people have false expectations of joining bands; I've seen this with some of the bands on our label. Some bands will be real big in their hometowns and they expect to go out on the road and have hundreds of kids at every show-they're spoiled. Then they get out on the road and play in front of small crowds--and it's not what they expected when they signed up--so they jump ship. The reality is that very few people can handle life on the road in a band; it's not glamorous at all. The people that last are usually big picture people that look past the bad and focus on their goals that are ahead of them and where they see themselves in the future, not in the present. Those are the people that don't get easily discouraged, and I'm happy to say that we have a good group of those people affiliated with this label. A lot of our bands have been through a lot of changes and trials, and they're still plugging away and doing what they love.
UTV: The Facedown Festival has grown into a widely recognized annual event. Can you tell me a bit about its inception, and what your original goal was? Have you met your goals?
Jason Dunn: The first Facedown Fest was in 2000, I believe-if I remember correctly! It was just a cool opportunity to have all of our bands play under one roof on one night in the label's hometown [Southern California]. The first Facedown Fest was only five bands, so it was easy to pull off. The last couple of years, we've had fifteen bands or so at the Fest.

As far as goals go, I never really set out with any; it was just a fun time to have all of the bands together. We're all so busy throughout the year so it's nice to get everyone in town together, do the fest, and then of course have the Facedown Feast. We rent out the patio of a great Italian restaurant on the San Diego coast and we all just relax for the day and soak in the amazing ocean views. It's one of my favorite times of the year. I would say that Facedown Fest 2004 was a landmark for me. It was the first year that we did both nights at a larger venue [The Glasshouse], and sold out both nights--especially when we had the Solid State tour in town about 30 minutes away. That's when I knew it was a big deal. Then in 2005 we did an East Coast Facedown Fest down in Maryland, and that was great as well. It was a very humbling time to see all of those kids 3,000 miles away from where I started the label, and they were so diehard and dedicated to what we were about. It was a very cool feeling for me!
UTV: Are there any advantages or disadvantages you feel come into play due to Facedown being a Christian label? For instance, are there alternative distribution channels open to the label that might not normally be open for others? Have you experienced any prejudice from some punk/hardcore factions due to the bands containing Christian members?
Jason Dunn: We get some flack for being Christian, but not much honestly. Sure, there are people that don't like us, but I think you find that anywhere and with anything that you do-you'll never make everyone happy. As far as advantages or disadvantages, there is an entire market dedicated to Christian music; it's the Christian bookstore world. However, we've never been much of a part of that because it's a very conservative world and they try to control our art a little more than I'm comfortable to allow. So that's never been an advantage for us. It's a road we could have gone down--and every other Christian label has-- but it's just not the place for us. Like I said before, we're selling music to people that are into heavy music so those kinds of people shop at indie stores, Hot Topic, Best Buy, etc.; that's always been our focus. There are a few Christian stores that "get" what we 're doing, and we love working with them, but we would never change our cover artwork or restrict our bands to be able to fit into the Christian bookstore mold.
UTV: What are some of the biggest challenges you've overcome running Facedown? How did you overcome these problems?
Jason Dunn: As with any business, there are always cash flow problems. When you're a company that's growing, it takes a lot of money to continue growing. As you get bigger, you end up spending more and more money to keep things improving, and then you run the risk of just going over your head. That's been the toughest thing for us, is just keeping up with the growth and trying to fuel the machine so that it can keep going and always improve. Throw in the some problems with distributors in the past, falling music sales and accounts not paying up, and it gets a bit tricky. You just have to be quick to adapt and change when needed.
UTV: What advice would you give someone who was trying to start a record label?
Jason Dunn: If you can, don't take out a loan to start a label-you'll blow through the money quicker than you realize, and you can put yourself in a tough spot. I'm happy that we never took out a loan when the label started, so our growth was controllable in the early days and you only spent the money that came in. It took us a while longer to get to a solid level, but it happened naturally and didn't make anyone bankrupt! Other advice is just find a few great bands that you believe in and put your attention into them; don't spread yourself thin. And most of all, always enjoy what you do. When you don't enjoy what you do anymore, stop doing it; nothing's worse being miserable in your life.
UTV: In closing, what can we expect from Facedown in 2007?
Jason Dunn: I'm very excited about 2007. We have some great records coming out. The first will be an album from xDeathstarx titled *We Are the Threat*-this album is just amazing! We signed a great band from Canada called Means, and their debut full-length will be out in March. Then we'll have some follow up records from Inked In Blood, Seventh Star, Flee the Seen, xLooking Forwardx and more. We're also working on a 10 year DVD/CD box set. So, Lord willing, it will be a good year for us. Thanks for the interview, and for all who have read down this far! X

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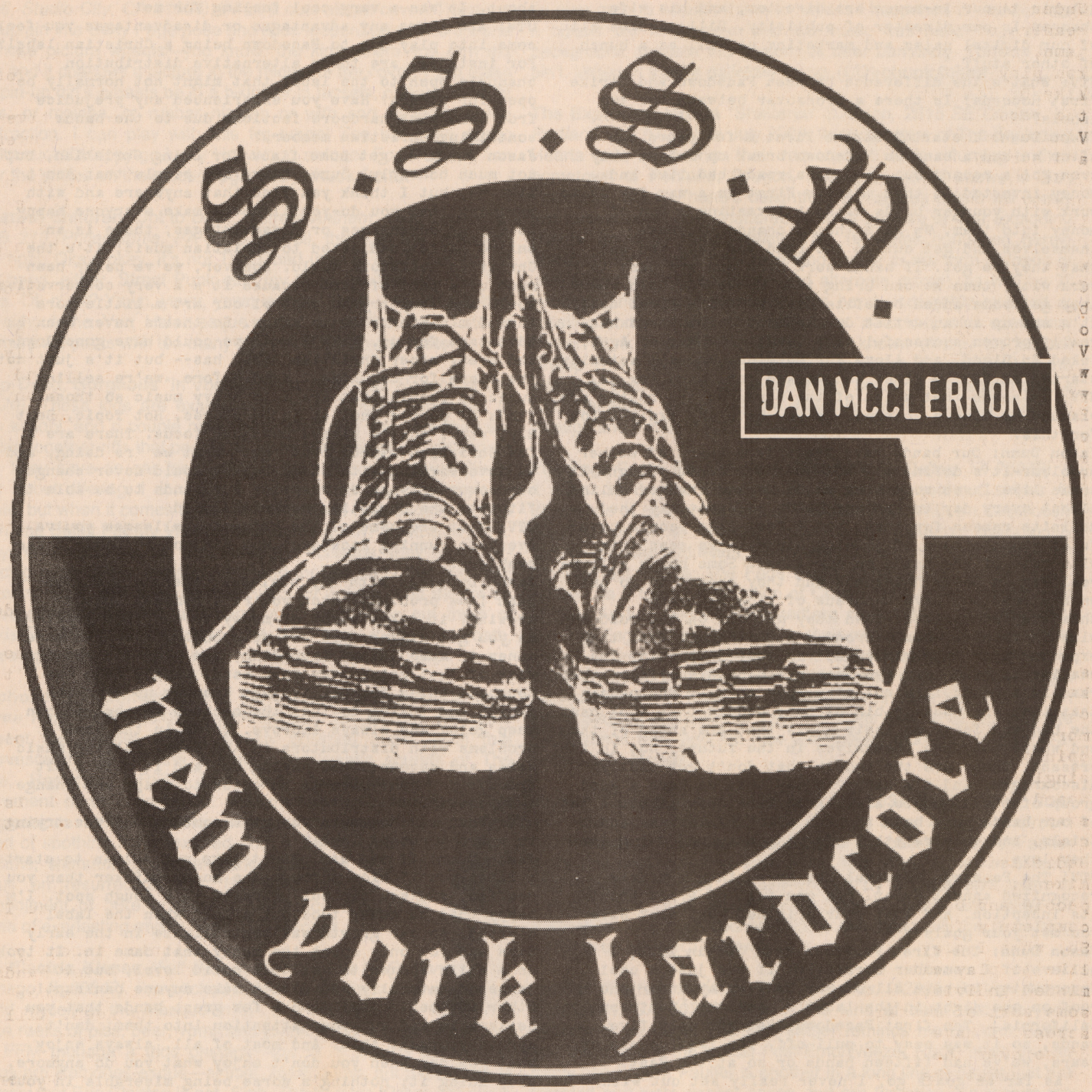



**I could give you an elaborate introduction as to what SSSP's about, but I'm gonna refrain from doing so. I could tell you that the band features Vinnie Value and Mike D., Hardcore legends in their own right, best known for their time served in prominent acts such as Kill Your Idols, CR, Warzone, Celebrity Murders and a slew of others, but you could get that from reading below. I could drop hints about one of the best Hardcore/Oi! records in some time, played with more heart and balls than the whole crop of Emo/Screamo/whatever bands shitting the bed today, but I'll let you listen and hear that for yourself. The truth is I've already said too much. The front of the self-titled 7" EP by SSSP, just released on Koi Records, really says it all: "2 friends, brought together through their mutual love of Oi! and Hardcore locked themselves in a studio for a few hours--and here you have: SSSP!"**

**Under the Volcano:** While I imagine that most readers of *Under the Volcano* know you guys by name, could you introduce yourselves and what you play in the band?

**Mike D:** I'm Mike D. I play guitar and bass on the record.

**Vinnie Value:** My name is Vinnie. I play drums and scream.

**UTV:** The two of you have pretty much been fixtures in and around the New York Punk/Hardcore scene for what feels like forever. Can you name some of the bands that you've been in over the years?

**Vinnie Value:** My first band was called Mark My Words! I was also in Warzone, No Redeeming Social Value, Fit of Anger, Cold Front, Grey Area, The Arsons, Kill Your Idols.

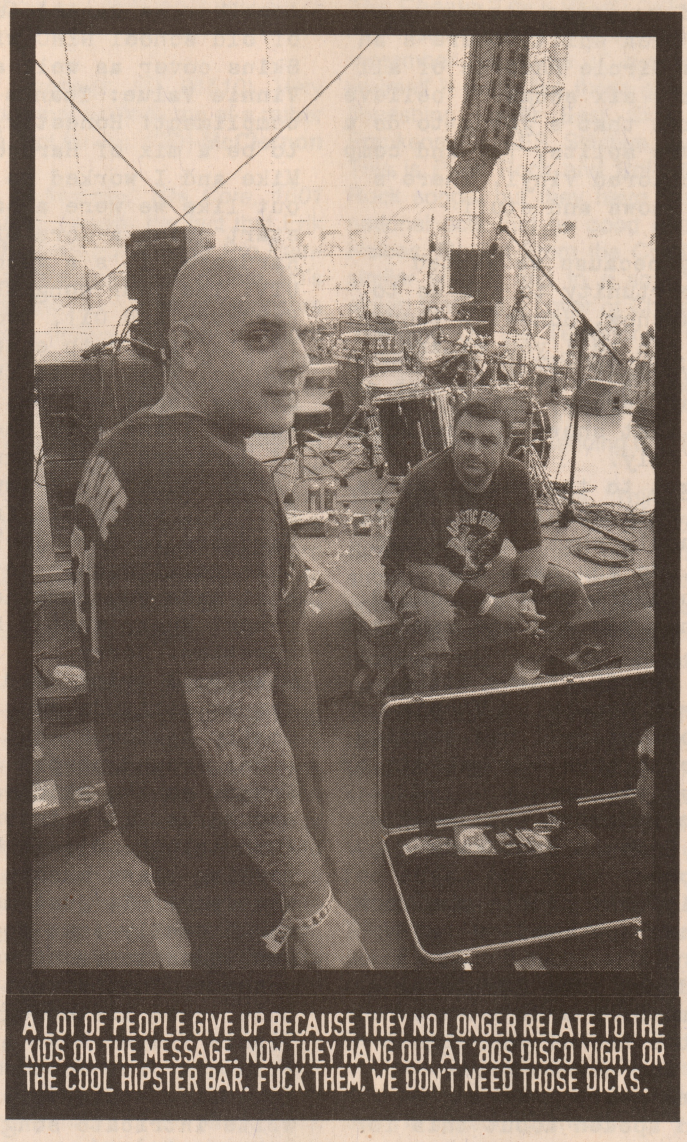
**Mike D:** I've been in Serpico, Celebrity Murders, CR, Milhouse, Promking, Dynasty, and of course, Kill Your Idols.

**UTV:** As individuals that have seen friends and bands come and go through the scene, what is it that keeps the two of you continuing to come back for more action? In your own opinion, what is the single-most reason you've heard for people walking away from the music and scene they seemed so dedicated to?

**Mike D:** There are a lot of people and bands that are completely full of shit. So, when I play in a band I like to play with like-minded individuals to get some sort of message across. I have continued to do so over the years to help combat the overwhelming sea of insincere jerkoffs using Punk and Hardcore as a springboard for their "careers." I think a lot of people walk away because their hearts weren't into it to begin with...that is, until they drag their washed-up asses out again so their long since irrelevant bands can do reunions and make some money.

**Vinnie Value:** This music/scene is what made me who I am today. As much as things have changed and shitty bands have become, I can't turn my back on something so important to me. It makes me want to do more--the result is this band. A lot of people give up because they feel they no longer relate to the kids or the message. Now they hang out at '80s disco night or the cool hipster bar. Fuck them, we don't need those dicks.

**UTV:** You've seen the New York and Long Island scenes change throughout the years, perhaps for better or worse. As people who were right in the thick of it, what are some of the positives and negative aspects that you've witnessed over time?



A LOT OF PEOPLE GIVE UP BECAUSE THEY NO LONGER RELATE TO THE KIDS OR THE MESSAGE. NOW THEY HANG OUT AT '80S DISCO NIGHT OR THE COOL HIPSTER BAR. FUCK THEM, WE DON'T NEED THOSE DICKS.

**Mike D:** I've watched a lot of sincere people come to shows and start bands and try to have a positive effect on things--bands like Sick of Talk, Disnihil, Capital and of course Deathcycle have really made an impact around here. And I have seen the people who don't matter disappear.

**Vinnie Value:** Most positive things are kids that start bands for the right reasons--they get together and express themselves through the music. A lot of kids start bands now in the hopes of getting on MTV or Fuse or "huge." That wasn't the case some years ago--people were pissed. I think there's a lot of fabricated anger going on. The heavier music scene is so mainstream now, but I could almost guarantee that SSSP will not be on *TRL* anytime soon. Notice I said ALMOST.

**UTV:** Vinnie, recently one of your other bands announced some rather distressing news. Kill Your Idols, after playing for over a decade, have decided to call it a day in Summer of 2007. So a couple of questions. Was there any one thing that made you guys decide to end the band? Does the band have any last releases in store? And finally, why announce a band's breakup so far in advance? Does that leave any room in your minds to perhaps prolong the band's activity?

**Mike D:** Hey, wasn't I in that band for a few minutes?

**Vinnie Value:** There really wasn't any one thing--it was a majority of things. All of us had our reasons, but the decision was mutual. We didn't want to cheat our following by just going through the motions and putting out some mediocre crap just to get back out on the road.

The band had a great run and did some amazing things. Kill Your Idols has always been a scene-orientated band and Andy [West, vocalist] said it best.: "We didn't out grow the scene, the scene out grew us." After such a long time, you can definitely get burnt out and run out of things to say. We want to go out with integrity because that is what this band always stood for.

There are a couple of releases coming up... I know there's a Poison Idea split, there's an EP coming out on Vicious Circle Records of all new material--I think it's six songs. I believe there's a label in Florida that's going to do a box set of all the obscure splits, 7", and comp songs on all different colored vinyl. There's talk of a DVD with live shows and stuff throughout the years.

We announced it early because we wanted everyone to have the opportunity to ask us to come to there town for a show. Honestly though, I do the booking, and I can tell you we are planning to do Boston, Vermont, Albany, Virginia, DC, Philly, New Jersey, Chicago around April/May. Then, last shows in New York City and Long Island in July.

UTV: Alright, so let's get to the reason we're here now. We're here to talk about SSSP. First off, can you tell the people what the acronym stands for and secondly, do you have any concerns that people who don't know you could totally misunderstand what you and the band are all about?

Mike D: The name stands for SKINHEADS STILL SCARE PEOPLE. It came from something Vinnie said to me in regards to a story I was telling him one day. I really don't care who gets it or who doesn't, to be honest with you.

Vinnie Value: I don't worry about what people think too much; I mean, I don't want kids thinking we're a white power band and maybe not get into us because of it, but people who know us and read the lyrics can see what we're about.

UTV: So how and when did you guys decide to get together? And at the time of the EP's recording, it was only the two of you right? Have you guys recruited any new members, perhaps for live performances?

Mike D: Vinnie and I had spoken about this for a while. He had some material written, and we thought it would be fun to get together to see how it would turn out..I'm sure he can elaborate more on this...

Vinnie Value: I just had some material I could never use with the bands I was in, so I asked Mike if he'd play bass and guitar so we could get them to tape. I sung on it because I knew exactly how I wanted it. We really liked the way it came out, so we did the 4 Skins cover as well. I always want us two to do the recordings. As for a band, we're still looking for the right members. As soon as we get them, we're playing out.

UTV: I mentioned the EP, which is like a left uppercut to the jaw and when I finally come to I wake in a gutter somewhere on the Lower East Side, circa 1988. Trust me, it hits that hard. So tell me, when you when in to record these four tracks, did you have a particular sound or idea in mind for what the record was gonna be like?

Mike D: Wow, thanks! We actually recorded six songs...Vinnie had the stuff written already, and when we were actually playing the songs together we wanted to try to incorporate a bit of old school NYHC with Oi! We recorded the 4 Skins cover as well as the five originals.

Vinnie Value: Thanks a lot, that's a huge compliment! Honestly, I felt like I wanted it to be a mix of Hardcore/Oi, but that's all. Mike and I worked so well together it just came out like we were a band for years. I want to start going a more Oi! route, but I love fast Hardcore; it's a good mix.

UTV: The four song EP blends both elements of Hardcore and Oi!, two genres that are closely related and both equally misunderstood by the public. What is it that you think ties both genres together, besides the similarity in sound? I ask this because it seems that a lot of Hardcore kids turn their backs on Oi! as being "dumb" or "simple" or exclusively for the British, while Oi! fans in return think Hardcore is for "jocks" and "thugs." So how has this relationship gotten misunderstood, and what made you combine the two styles in your songs? Fuck, what a horribly long-winded question. Sorry.

Mike D: I think Hardcore owes a lot to Oi! as far as attitude goes. This is going to sound pretty textbook, but we grew up in the NYHC scene around people like Raybeez and Agnostic Front, so the skinhead lifestyle was always around us. It's important to know the roots of such things. Oi! is hard, street-wise, and working class music; so is Hardcore, for the most part. It just makes sense that the two could easily come together. Bands like Warzone and Agnostic Front were huge pioneers in that respect. That's what we pretty much came into this scene listening to and being a part of.

Vinnie Value: Mike answered this well; I agree with him. The more simple the song, the more I like it. I hate people that think you need to write intricate songs to get your point across. If it sounds good, it's good! It's Hardcore, four chord progressions are the best. You want to get intricate, go play in a Led Zeppelin cover band.

UTV: The EP was released on Koi Records, run by Mark Jessup. What about the label made you decide to work with him and be honest, how awesome do you think the vinyl came out?

Vinnie Value: Mark is a great guy; to me, everyday is his birthday! He did an amazing job with the record. I really hope it does well for him, but I have a feeling bands are going to start knocking on his door. It's nice to work with someone that runs a label and is so hands on. I've worked with labels where you basically get lost in the mix because of the roster, or

you don't tour enough, blah, blah. I don't want to mention names....uh, Victory and SideOneDummy!

Mike D: Celebrity Murders and Kill Your Idols worked with Mark already on a comp called *Scream For Help*, which benefits the Louisiana ASPCA, so there was already a relationship there. I asked him to take a listen to the early recordings that SSSP did and he was totally into it. I think Mark puts a lot of dedication and energy into his label, and the end product shows that for sure! When he said he'd put the record out we were totally psyched. Working with him has been a fucking dream. I've been on "bigger" labels live Equal Vision and SideOneDummy, and have never been treated as awesomely as Mark has treated us. Of course I'm beyond happy with the way the 7" came out. This was a really awesome effort between Vinnie, Mark and myself. I'm proud of us.

UTV: Speaking of vinyl--as someone who by the outside world could be considered a geek when it comes to collecting vinyl--it seems that the format has really been making a comeback, with more and more bands once again releasing 7"s and 12"s, with some bands in particular releasing vinyl-only material. Have you noticed this as well, and what do you think of this trend, especially in this day and age of modern technology?

Mike D: I used to be total collector scum and then I stopped for a while. I am kind of back on it a little again [laughs]. Vinyl is just nicer all around. The colored vinyls and the packaging with lyrics, etc...it really seems so much more fulfilling than a CD.

Vinnie Value: I like it a lot. The layouts are usually different, and there's something special about vinyl... although we've played some shows and kids are like, "Hey, you guys got calenders?"

UTV: It's my understanding that when SSSP started it was originally supposed to be a project played by friends, but with the imminent demise of Kill Your Idols, is there a chance that the band could become more of a full-time ordeal? If so, any chance of a tour, or would you try and keep it local?

Mike D: I'm sure we will get around to playing shows as soon as we solidify a lineup, but I think it will remain more of a special thing if it stays a project. I think all of the recordings we do will wind up just being the two of us.

Vinnie Value: I'd like to do some things, but we're going to do it old style--for fun!! Ha!

UTV: Alright fellas, thanks for your time and good luck with the new band!

Mike D: No, thank you Skippy.

Vinnie Value: Thanks so much for giving us the chance to be heard! I'm going to write a song for *Under the Volcano*! X

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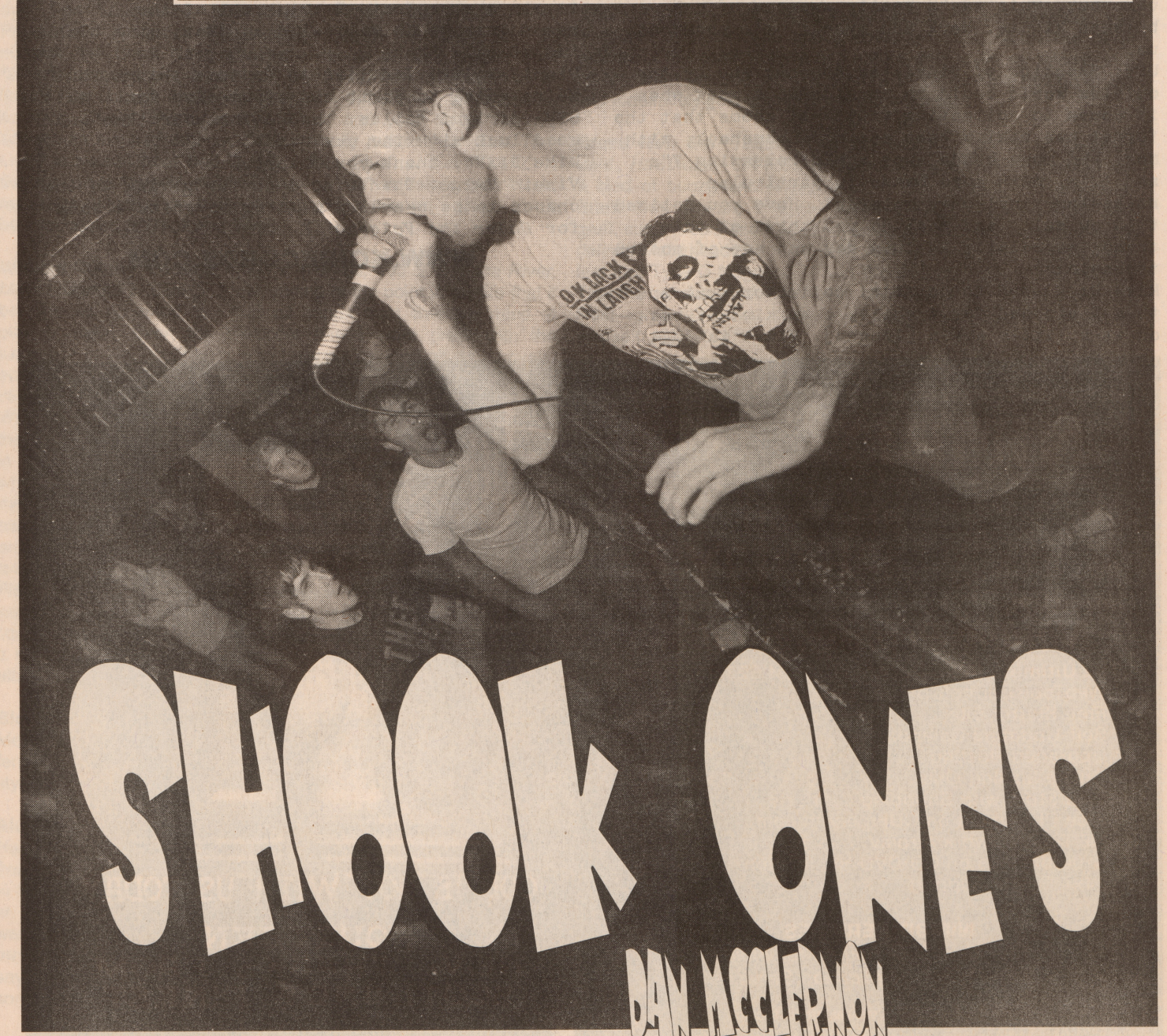
**Bellingham, Washington's Shook Ones are constantly compared to Lifetime and Kid Dynamite. While those comparisons are justified, know that they not only share a similar sound, but also that same rare combination of anger, emotion, intensity and talent that those aforementioned bands were so loved for possessing. Hell, Shook Ones even have the audacity to cover one of my favorite tunes by Leatherface ("Not a Day Goes By"), a band I consider nearly untouchable, and not only do it justice, but give Frankie Stubbs and co. a run for their money. Facetious Folly Feat [Revelation] is Shook Ones second full-length, and it's with the utmost certainty that I say this is the best thing the pioneering Hardcore label has released in ages. If this is a Renaissance for the label--or at the very least, a sign of things to come--then count me in. Furthermore, take my word that Shook Ones will be at the forefront of the next wave of Punk Rock bands to make a difference in your lives.**




# SHOOK ONES

DAN MCCLEPNON

*Photo: Jan Urant*

Under the Volcano: Since this is your first interview for *Under the Volcano*, could you please introduce yourselves to our readers?
Kelly Aiken: I'm Kelly, and I play guitar in Shook Ones. I enjoy reading, watching movies, and cooking/baking vegan delights.
UTV: How and when did Shook Ones first come together? And after reading that last sentence, I should let it be known I don't mean that in a sexual manner...
Kelly Aiken: Shook Ones first came together when Scott [Freeman, vocals] and Funds [guitar] started playing songs that were supposed to sound like Lifetime in their basement. They recorded a demo with their friend and future bandmate, Chris Pratt, on drums, and everything went from there. A few years and few lineup changes later, and here we are.
UTV: For a long time, Washington has been known as the birthplace of Grunge and nothing more. In your opinion, how is the Punk/Hardcore scene currently in Bellingham and the surrounding cities?
Kelly Aiken: Firstly, Nirvana was punk as fuck. The Punk/Hardcore scene in the Northwest in general is pretty awesome. There are lots of sweet bands in the area--Sinking Ships, Go It Alone, Daggermouth, etc.-and lots of sweet kids doing shows--what's up Bremerton?! There's definitely a cycle effect where things will be good for a while and then not-so-good, and it varies from city to city, but as a whole I'd say we're pretty fortunate and happy to be where we are. All bullshit aside, the "scene" here is pretty solid.

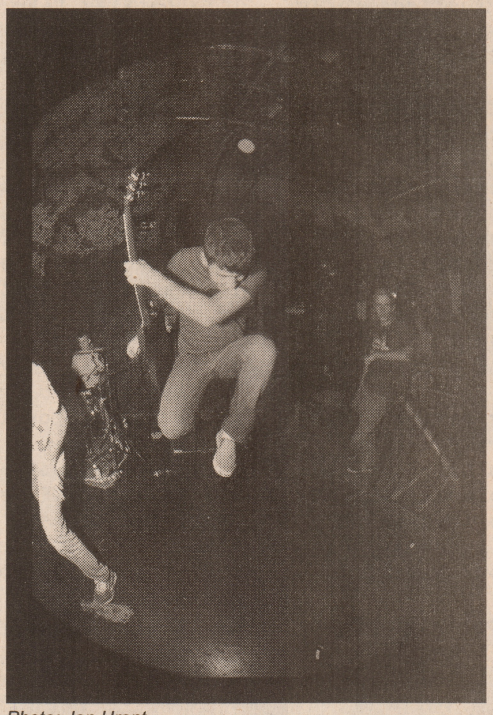


Photo: Jan Urant

UTV: In relation to the last question, what was it like growing up so close to one of biggest Rock scenes ever assembled? Were you a fan of the Grunge scene back then, and what did you take away from that experience--positive or negative--that has influenced the way you approach music today?
Kelly Aiken: We were fans then, and we're fans now. Pretty much every tour involves a debate of which Nirvana record is the best--Funds says *Incesticide*, I think everyone else agrees *In Utero*. For our 7" record release, we did a Grunge-themed show, where we did a terrible job of covering lots of songs from early/mid'90s. I think we were a little too young during the actual "Grunge explosion" to take anything from it beyond an appreciation for the music that came out of it, and we all still have that.
UTV: You guys hail from Bellingham, which, if I'm not mistaken, is the home of Estrus Records. While I'm aware that you guys might not share a similar sound with the Garage Rock leanings of the bands on Estrus, were you at all influenced by what you saw a DIY Punk label could be capable of?
Kelly Aiken: To be honest, Estrus doesn't have that much of a presence in Bellingham. Nothing against that label, but it's not like any of their bands are from Bellingham or they do a ton of shows in Bellingham. The dude who runs it [Dave Crider] just happens to live in Bellingham--he could live anywhere, and that label would be pretty much the same, I would guess.
UTV: Your first full-length, *Sixteen*, was released on Endwell Records. For a first full-length, I was astounded at how well-written it was, and how tight musically the band already was. What's your opinion of the record now that you're a year or two removed from the writing process of said record?
Kelly Aiken: We all have differing opinions on that, and just about everything else. I personally still love that record, but I didn't join the band till just after it was recorded. I know both Scott and Funds like the new record a lot more, but I think that has more to do with the recording quality and the performance quality. I think most of the songs on *Sixteen* still stand-up well with the songs on the new record.
UTV: Speaking of Endwell, I heard rumors that they were no longer around, which bummed me out because they were/are a great label. Any truth to that, or are they still kicking?
Kelly Aiken: Scott is just crazy busy with work and school. The label is still functioning, definitely, and dude is still alive and kicking, he's just super busy with other pursuits these days. I'm sure he'll get back in the game as soon he finds a little bit of free time.
UTV: After critical praise and constant touring, Shook Ones were soon signed to Revelation Records. How did working with Revelation first come about?
Kelly Aiken: We were on tour with Sinking Ships a couple summers ago, and they were talking to Rev at the time. Somehow our name came up while they were talking, and then Rev called us. Next thing you know, we both have Rev stars on our shirts.
UTV: So what exactly made you guys choose Revelation? While this may seem like a no-brainer, it seems to me that in recent years Revelation has sort of stepped away from pure Punk and Hardcore acts. What did they offer that most appealed to you?
Kelly Aiken: The Rev star--it's all about the Rev star. The chance to be a part of that history is something you wouldn't find at any other label. Regardless of what they've done over recent years, everyone who is interested in the kind of music we make is familiar with Revelation Records. They're pretty much a household name--as far as Hardcore goes--and there aren't many other labels that can say that.
UTV: Your first release for Revelation was the three song EP *Slaughter of the Insole*, which really whet the appetite for your upcoming full- length. On the EP, you include a brilliant Leatherface cover, "Not A Day Goes By," off of my favorite record of theirs, *Mush*. So my question is, since Leatherface is one of my favorite bands, what is your favorite song and record by them, and how did you come to agree on "Not A Day Goes By" for the

record?
**Kelly Aiken:** Sadly, I'm not the best one to answer this. The only record I've ever spent much time with is *Mush*, and "Not A Day Goes By" is clearly the best song on that record. The idea for that one was entirely Scott, and we were all into it, so went with it. He's a huge Leatherface fan, so next time we tour through your area, ask him and he'll have a much better answer for this question.
**UTV:** The brilliant follow-up to *Slaughter of the Insole* is your second full-length, *Facetious Folly Feat*. Your thoughts on what makes this record stand out from your previous material? And how do you think it compares?
**Kelly Aiken:** Again, we all have differing opinions on this, but most obviously is the recording and performance quality. The record just sounds cleaner and tighter than *Sixteen*, which is partly due to time, partly due to production, and partly due to natural increase in musical proficiency with time. Song-writing wise, I think the new record is a bit more dynamic, which has a lot to do with the fact that we're more/different people involved in the writing process this time around. And a lot of it just has to do with getting older and picking up a few more tricks along the way.
**UTV:** So I have to ask since in every review I read of yours it's mentioned: How sick are you of hearing how much you sound like both Lifetime and Kid Dynamite? Do you hear the resemblance, and do you think it's as closely related to them as people make it out to be? Furthermore, are there any bands past or present that you consider yourselves influenced more by?
**Kelly Aiken:** I've got Lifetime lyrics tattooed on my arm--so does Scott-- so I wouldn't say I'm "sick" of it, exactly; I will never be offended by being compared to one of my favorite bands. At the same time, it does seem to happen an awful lot. Yes, we know we sound like Lifetime, but you don't see those same kind of comparisons with a band like Go It Alone; it's not like every Go It Alone review mentions Count Me Out. Punk and Hardcore is a naturally derivative genre, so writing any band off with an immediate comparison, I think, tends to sell that band short, even if it's appropriate. It's totally fair to compare us to Lifetime or Kid Dynamite--obviously we're a melodic Hardcore band, and Scott sounds a lot like Jason [Shevchuk]--but I would like to think we're taking those bands as influences and doing something a little different, rather than just trying to be an imitation. We all listen to tons of different stuff, so the "what else are you influenced by" question is always a bit tough. Scott loves Billy Bragg. Funds loves the Cro-Mags. I love Taking Back Sunday. We all love Jawbreaker and the Exploding Hearts, plus way more. I know all of that enters into our songwriting, so hopefully all of that translates, at least a little, to the listener.
**UTV:** So, what do you guys have planned in support of *Facetious Folly Feat*?
**Kelly Aiken:** Touring. As much and to as many places as time and money will allow. We're going to Japan for the first time. Hopefully we'll make it to Europe again. We still need to do a proper Canadian tour. And there's still the US, for the millionth time.
**UTV:** Thanks for your time and good luck with the new record!
**Kelly Aiken:** Thank you! X

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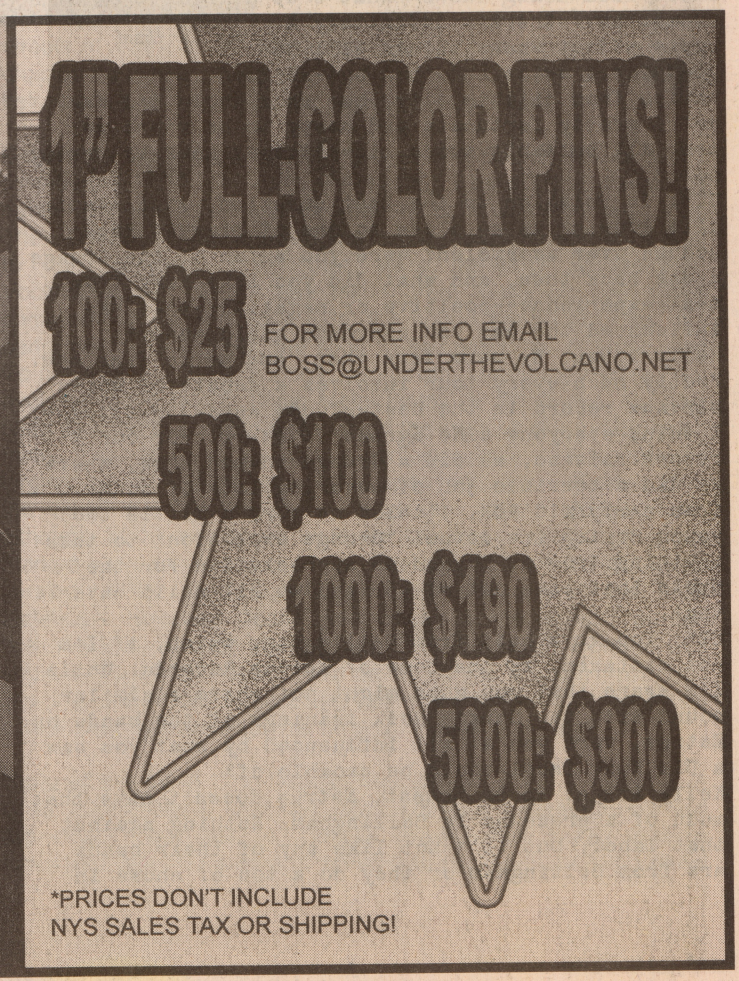

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# Audio Reviews

**Angtoria** "God Has A Plan For Us All" *(Listenable, BP 73, 62930 Wimereux, France).* I don't know why I even bother with anything that Sarah Jezebel Diva does other than Cradle of Filth. She's a fine back up vocalist with an amazing range and dynamic that works for theatrical Black Metal in small doses. When she does her own projects, they're always overblown epic Metal ballads that are like film soundtracks with her voice over it. Sarah can sing—she might be the most vocally talented woman in Black Metal, 'cause trust me, some of the people they find for backups suck shit. But in reality, all this is—despite the topless sexy chick on the cover—is a true Metal opera. They have guests like My Dying Bride vocalist Aaron Stainthorpe and Dave Pybus from Cradle, plus Rikard Andersson from Space Odyssey who **did** write a Metal opera. Basically, if you want to hear Metal show tunes, this is for you, but don't let the presentation fool you—it's just like To/Die/For or any other project Sarah has put together. (CD)**-Myk**

**Antidote** "Another Dose" *(Rodent Popsicle, POB 1143, Allston, MA 02134).* One of the better Street Punk-oriented bands going today, Antidote return with some of their best material to date. Hailing from the Netherlands, Antidote play fast and furious Punk Rock that's catchier and more tuneful than most examples from the genre. While most songs are performed in English, there are a select few that are sung in their native tongue, which adds a unique aspect to the recording. They sing about life on the streets, drugs, drugs on the street, and railing against homophobia, and don't sound foolish doing it. If you're a fan of spiky hair, bondage pants and studded leather jackets, this could be one of your new favorite bands, if they aren't already. (CD)**-McClernon**

**Bad Astronaut** "Twelve Small Steps, One Giant Disappointment" *(Fat Wreck Chords, POB 193690, San Francisco, CA 94119-3690).* The closest band that Bad Astronaut resembles is Lagwagon, which makes perfect sense since this vehicle is being steered by Joey Cape. Bad Astronaut was originally started by Cape, Marko of Sugarcult and former Lagwagon drummer Derek Plourde, then incorporated several more members, but with the untimely death of Plourde, it seemed like it might be the end of the band. But I'm happy to say that the finished product is nothing short of great, and perhaps some of the best work that Cape and Plourde have ever been a part of. *Twelve Small Steps…* is a little more midtempo than most Lagwagon material, and is heavily influenced by keyboard instrumentation, which really fills out the songs. Bad Astronaut may not be a full-time band, but this album is far better than those by so many full-time acts out there. (CD)**-McClernon**

**Bambix** "Club Matuchek" *(Go Kart, POB 20, New York, NY 10012).* Bambix is a long-time, female-fronted Melodic Punk band from the Netherlands that reminds me a bit of another Dutch act, Funeral Oration. I suppose Bambix could be categorized as Pop Punk, but they're a bit harder-edged than all that, with less melody in the vocals as well. Hell, there's even a bit of a Metal-influence at times that doesn't go unnoticed. While nothing new to me, Bambix are a pleasure to listen to nonetheless. (CD)**-McClernon**

**The Barbarellatones** "Invasion of the Surf Zombies" *(www.barbarellatones.com).* The title of the album says it all. Pretty awesome horror-tinged Surf Rock. If The Misfits and Man or Astroman were to make sweet love, this would be the bastard child, the red-headed ginger kid that would be produced. With 19 songs total, the album gets a little tedious three quarters of the way in, but it doesn't matter because their song "I Had Sex with a CHUD." alone makes purchasing this album worthwhile. (CD)**-McClernon**

**The Barbarellatones** "Invasion of the Surf Zombies" *(www.barbarellatones.com).* Whoa. Suddenly I feel like I've eaten Quaaludes at a horror-themed happening hosted by Helios Creed and Sonic Boom. B-movie characters are the guests—I'm rubbing elbows with zombies, robots and shapeshifters, drinking martinis with a CHUD on a leopard-print couch. Lurch is the bartender, Bloody Marys on special. Everyone shifts from black and white to color as the DJ spins the Cramps, The Deviants and the Count Five, among other psychedelic nuggets of yester-decade. The party starts to swirl as Dr. Frank N. Furter dances on the bar, and I think it's time to lay back and dream… (CD)**-chuck.foster**

**Beat Beat Beat** "Living In the Future" *(Dirtnap, 2615 SE Clinton, Portland, OR 97202). Living In the Future* is a seedy and sordid blast of skid row style Punk Rock that oozes sin, sleaze, and sickness like a junkie craving his next fix of smack. Each one of the 12 songs recklessly careening off this disc is a snotty, energetically blistering testimonial of a savage, carefree lifestyle spent teetering on the edge of decadent self-abuse and wild nihilistic abandon. Like Johnny Thunders, The Riffs, and The Black Halos before them, Beat Beat Beat sound as if they drunkenly roam the trash-strewn streets of a decaying urban jungle on any given night of the week cruising for drugs, cheap sex, and dead-end dreams. So what the hell else does life have to offer anyway? (CD)**-Moser**

**Behemoth** "Sventevith (Storming Near the Baltic)" *(Music Video Distributors, POB 280, Oaks, PA 19456).* I believe that this is the debut full-length for Behemoth, when the band was still a two-piece. The CD has been remastered and has a superior sound compared to the previous EPs that were recently remastered. Vocalist/guitarist Nergal has taken great steps on this album compared to the two early EPs; the sound quality is better, the performances are better, the song writing has more direction, and it's not a blatant Burzum clone. *Sventevith* has the right amount of evolving Metal for my Black Metal tastes. It still retains the raw, blatantly offensive sound that marked the early bands, but it's much faster than many of the band's contemporaries which preferred dirging, spooky riffs as opposed to speed attacks. The artwork for the album still has the spooky black and white "woodcut" look, although Behemoth never went for the really wacky logos that marked many bands from that era. Basically, this is the Black Metal version of the band that has evolved into one of the most technically advanced Death Metal bands on the planet. You can hear the band develop from the first EP to this album by leaps and bounds. Behemoth doesn't have an album you shouldn't own, and now this is available domestically for the first time. It also features a bonus track that wasn't on the original release. (CD)**-Myk**

**Bible of the Devil** "The Diabolic Procession" *(Cruz Del Sur, C.P. 5109, 00153 Roma, Ostiense, Italy).* Oh man, I would have loved this when I was like 14. Take a vocalist that vocally strongly resembles Blackie Lawless of WASP and put him in front of a Metal

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band that's equal parts WASP, Dokken, and Diamond Head. This album just rocks out in that classic Metal way, but is sort of nondescript in the way it's delivered. There's a lot of classic Metal groove, but the guitars have the overblown '80's feel and the vocals have that Saxon/Witchfinder General/New Wave of British Heavy Metal structure that sound like they were delivered by Lawless. In an era when Retro Metal is so in, it's good to hear a band that sounds classic, but doesn't sound like it brutally stolen from the past. (CD)-**Myk**

**Big Dictator** *(Big Dictator, www.myspace.com/bigdictatortheband).* The spirit of Bon Scott lives on in a guy from New York called Donsky. Angus, Malcolm and George Young have an illegitimate brother named Gil T. Rod Cassavale could be Phil Rudd's first cousin. Enough said. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

**The Black Neon** "Arts & Crafts" *(Memphis Industries, www.memphis-industries.com).* In the tradition of Spacemen 3's Pete Kember, aka Sonic Boom, Steve Webster, formerly half of the duo, Fort Lauderdale, has donned himself the Black Neon, Psychedelic Krautrock Pop mastermind. In 10 songs and 36 minutes, the Black Neon weaves a nebula of dark matter, from Motorik instrumentals a la Neu!, early Kraftwerk or Harmonia to Space Pop Lounge music via Stereolab. In between, there's some booming Secret Machines-style Rock and your Sonic Boom/J Spaceman inspired outings. Does it really matter that "Cast That Light" is swiped from Bob Dylan's "Baby Blue" or that "TX81Z" is damn close to Roxy Music's "Editions of You" on barbiturates? Nah, not really. Skip the new Beck album and buy this one instead. You'll be a lot cooler. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

**Blinded Colony** "Bedtime Prayers" *(Pivotal, 665 S. Banana River, Merritt Island, FL 32952).* It was getting to the point in my life that it became an accepted fact that all bands from Sweden ruled at playing Metal. Even the Hardcore bands were great with the exception of the Doughnuts, who I always pawned off as a novelty act anyway. Sweden just didn't have bad bands, and when a band did a poor album, it was still better than most band's best efforts. Well, I do believe I have found the anomaly. Blinded Colony has all the Swedish parts, the strong recording and the obvious schooling in playing their instruments, but they just don't have that strong writing tradition. There is too much of a trendy American sound mixed into the music, with way too many clean sung harmonies/choruses and a lead vocalist that isn't nearly strong enough. Musically, this is as generic as Swedish Metal goes; it's textbook-sounding and lacks the creative aspects of a Soilwork, In Flames, or Dark Tranquility. Blinded Colony are treading down well worn paths and offer little to compete with their pioneering countrymen. While these guys are probably a fine opening band on a live bill, they do little to draw you into listening to this specific album. (CD)-**Myk**

**Bloodlined Calligraphy** "Ypsilanti" *(Facedown).* Female-fronted Metalcore. Replace Hatebreed's Jamey Jasta with a monotone female and we're not really that far off for the ol' comparison. Is this style of music finally done? (CD)-**KevTV**

**Blue Skies For Black Hearts** "Love Is Not Enough" *(King of Hearts, POB 42174, Portland, OR 97242).* Pretty good Pop Rock from Portland, Oregon. Lead songwriter Pat Kearns, better known to most as producer for the excellent Exploding Hearts records, has an incredible knack for writing the ultimate Pop hook, complete with warm layers of harmonies that shatter the works of most bands that make their way onto mainstream radio. While I wouldn't necessarily say they sound like them, Blue Skies For Black Hearts remind me somewhat of The Shins, or at least they seem to cater to a similar audience. While this isn't usually what I go for, I can't say I'm the least disappointed with what I've heard. (CD)-**McClernon**

**Bombers** *(www.myspace.com/wearebombers).* Queens, New York's Bombers launch themselves upon the scene with their debut four-song EP that harkens back to the early days of Lawrence Arms and Alkaline Trio—ya know, before they got all dark and gothy. Haunting melodies, danceable rhythms and a dual vocal attack are what Bombers are all about here. Members have previously served time in Dishnihil and Lakota, but it's safe to say that Bombers sound nothing like them, yet are just as good, if not better. These guys are weathered veterans of the New York/Long Island scene and are dedicated to shaking things up a bit. Be on the lookout for Bombers, 'cause they're gonna be everywhere soon. (CD)-**McClernon**

**Bones Brigade** "Endless Bummer" *(Coalition, Newtonstraat 212, 2562 KW Den Haag, The Netherlands).* Volatile and chaotic Thrash Punk centered on skateboarding and having fun at the expense of others. The sheer intensity of this release alone just might cost you a couple of brain cells and a collapsed skull. Much like other albums of the same subject and nature, this particular release is a bit too short and leaves a little more to be desired, though in the end it definitely gets the job done. (CD)-**Manic**

**Brand New Sin** "Tequila" *(Century Media, 2323 W. El Segundo Blvd., Hawthorne, CA 90250).* Syracuse-based Brand New Sin are a bled of booze and Rock, as their title not-so-subtly suggests. Brand New Sin are THE bar band—hints of Southern Rock with gruff, sung vocals and a focus on intricate riffs. Some songs have a definite Motorhead feel to them as well, and the song "Reaper Man" features Type O Negative's Peter Steele contributing some vocals. That the band named their album after booze isn't surprising in the least—grab a twelve pack and thrash around your room by yourself. (CD)-**KevTV**

**The Break In** "Unbowed" *(Surprise Attack, www.surpriseattackrecords.com).* Though Metalcore generally isn't my thing, I have a soft spot for bands that pay homage to the raw metal crunch championed by Cleveland greats Ringworm and Integrity. The Break In is such a band, and *Unbowed*, their full-length debut, is plastered with crushing riffs, animalistic vocals, and jarring rhythms, all awash in dissonant murk. Downtrodden Hardcore with some serious midpaced chugging is the formula here-and no, we're not talking Crossover. This is dark, metallic gloom that strays from self-indulgent riff wankery or half-baked tech noodling to resurrect that evil-sounding Midwestern fray of yesterday with brutal effect. (CD)-**Ramek**

**The Buckshots** "Too Hot 2 Handle" *(Heptown, www.heptown.com).* Proving once again why I need to move to Sweden, The Buckshots rock our socks off in the form of '50's influenced Garage Rock n' Roll ala The Sonics, mixed with just enough Rockabilly and Country to keep it interesting. Incredible musicianship backed with a vocalist who can sing his ass off, a rare occurrence in this day and age. This is the kind of record that 50 years ago would've had all the kids dancing up a storm in the soda shops in Smalltown, USA and all the greasers slicking up their pompadours for a night of smoking and drinking. On the other hand, it's 2006 and *Too Hot 2 Handle* has me drinking still, so...(CD)-**McClernon**

**Bullet Treatment** "The Mistake" *(Think Fast, www.thinkfastrecords.com).* The debut album from Bullet Treatment harnesses the energy of old SoCal Hardcore acts such as Black Flag, the Adolescents and DC pioneers such as Minor Threat and SOA. Bullet Treatment has always had a revolving door lineup

(over 20 members have come and gone), but the foundation of founder DC and Matt Caughthran of The Bronx on vocals is rock solid and instrumental to the band's success. While I've never been a big fan of The Bronx (I always thought the band got a little monotonous, especially in regard to Caughthran's vocals), Bullet Treatment tries to accomplish nothing more than playing the fast and furious Hardcore circle pits were made for. The guttural vocals of Caughthran remind me a lot of John Brannon's in Negative Approach, which is naturally a great thing. Bullet Treatment's not about reinventing the wheel; it's all about just spinning it way out of control. (CD)-**McClernon**

**Buffalo Killers** (*Alive, POB 7112, Burbank, CA 91510).* Very boring Country/hillbilly-tinged Pop Rock that reminds me of a rather lackluster Beatles meets *Deliverance*. Not for me. (CD)-**McClernon**

**Built Upon Frustration** "The Book of Morning" *(Da Core, 1601 Banksville Road, 2ND Fl, Pittsburgh, PA).* Despite the fact that Erik Klinger of Pro Pain is in this band, don't expect another Pro Pain-inspired set of tracks. This is more an amalgamation of late '90's Hardcore with some Thrash influence and even a bit of Grindcore (especially vocally). The blast beats betray the power chord progressions of the Hardcore influence, but the tones of the guitar hold it all together. Vocally, you hear a mix of Hatebreed and Earth Crisis on the main vocals, and then a second set of vocals in the background that are more Carcass-like in delivery. The inclusion of more overtly Metal guitar parts diversify the sound a lot, and allow the band to become a modern era "Crossover" band. Built Upon Frustration actually have some things in common with bands like Heaven Shall Burn, Caliban and the rest of the German Metalcore scene that's risen to prominence lately. If you're familiar with bands like Tension*, Inhuman, and other Hardcore bands that embrace their Metal roots as fans, then this is for you. (CD)-**Myk**

**Burning Skies** "Desolation" *(LifeForce, POB 680, Conshohocken, PA 19428).* Burning Skies is like the British version of Bleeding Through with John Tardy doing background vocals. Metalcore guitar riffs—which of course are not far from being Swedish style guitar riffs—are ripping through the majority of these tracks, but there are some elements of classic Death Metal in the vein of Obituary and Deicide, and I think that's what thrusts this album into its realm of heavy. It doesn't hurt that the album was recorded by the same guy that did Heaven Shall Burn, who knows a lot about this kind of stuff. I think these guys are a step behind Heaven, Caliban and even Purified In Blood, but it's another sign that the European Metal community have really embraced this sound and are now becoming the innovators. (CD)-**Myk**

**Car Bomb** *(www.carbomb.us).* This is a three song demo from local Long Island act, Car Bomb. In addition to recently signing to Relapse, the band is also made up of members of the bands Neck and Spooge (if you delve deeper, there are a lot of other bands that could be listed as well). The band plays some twisted stuff, the kind of music you would expect to hear on the Ipecac label. Bands like The Daughters, Dillinger Escape Plan and The Locust come to mind, as do bands that expanded the Grindcore scene, like Discordance Axis. The music is technically difficult, and at times it's tough to listen to. The songs are so precise that without paying the utmost attention, you could easily get lost. Being that this band is made up of the people it is, I can honestly say I would never have expected the music on the CD to come from members of those bands. (CD)-**Myk**

**Chad Rex and the Victorstands** "Gravity Works Fire Burns" *(Mars Motors, 1608 W. Mountain Ave., Fort Collins, CO 80521).* Most of the singer-songwriters I hear these days try to be Tom Waits. Chad Rex is trying to be Tom Petty. Why? (CD)-**chuck.foster**

**Cheap Sex** "Written In Blood" *(Punk Core, POB 916, Middle Island, NY 11953).* Cheap Sex are back with their third album, chock full of fist-pumping, finger pointing Street Punk anthems. The band has never sounded tighter and Mike Virus is at his most seething, both vocally and lyrically. While the political subject matter the band covers is nothing new (in particular the attacks on Bush), I'm sure there's still some angry youth out there that will find it refreshing and new. (CD)-**McClernon**

**The Cheats** "Life's Short..." *(Da Core, 1601 Banksville Road, 2ND Fl, Pittsburgh, PA).* This is one of those bands that you may never remember the name of, but when you hear them, you'll say to yourself "I really like those guys." The Cheats remind of the once flourishing Lower East Side scene with bands like Electric Frankenstein, LES Stitches, Suicide Kings and The Casualties. This is Punk Rock and Roll where the songs are still traditional Rock songs, but they have that early punk attitude. Other more national acts that be good reference points might be The Black Haloes, Rocket From the Crypt (not comparing, they just have a similar sound) and to a small degree, Murder City Devils. The album features a cover of Cheap Trick's "Surrender" and Blondie's "Hanging On the Telephone," which are both superb and really rocking. The originals are catchy as well, and make you yearn for the days when The Continental was packed with drunks and it wasn't uncommon to see Joey Ramone hanging out or the guys from D-Generation tending bar. (CD)-**Myk**

**The Chelsea Smiles** "Thirty Six Hours Later" *(Acetate, POB 36756, Los Angeles, CA 90036).* Oh man, hell yeh, The Chelsea Smiles brashly careen out of the stereo speakers like a nuclear subway train transporting a frenetically amplified cargo of high-octane junkie Rock n' Roll! Vocalist Todd Youth snottily spits out a leather-jacketed litany of depraved lyrics in a rush of booze, nicotine, and reckless, street-savvy bravado. The blistering, cauterizing guitar leads are urgently reminiscent of Johnny Thunders at his cocky swaggering peak, and the pristinely turbulent rhythmic tremors emanating from the bass and drums are pure unadulterated noisy nastiness. *Thirty Six Hours Later* is the end-all sonic epitome of a life spent wallowing in the gutter with a syringe stuck in the arm and crushed dreams coursing through the veins. Welcome to the Promised Land of Rock n' Roll! (CD)-**Moser**

**Cloak/Dagger** *(Grave Mistake, POB12482, Richmond, VA 23241).* Blistering Punk/Hardcore debut from Richmond, Virginia. Four songs total, and each one is a rager. The band features a member of Trial By Fire, which makes sense since Cloak/Dagger **does** share a similar sound with them, but these guys take it to another level entirely, playing faster, harder and louder. To try and make a comparison, think Black Flag meets Hot Snakes or Swiz. These cats just got picked up by Jade Tree, so expect big things from them in the coming months. (7")-**McClernon**

**Cobra Skulls** "Draw Muhammad" *(Humaniterrorist, www.humaniterrorist.com).* Um, yeah, every song sounds like The Clash or Social Distortion. As I absolutely can't stand either band, I'm probably the wrong guy to review this CD. I'm being fair. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

**Coho** "Things Change" *(Lujo, 3209 Jennie Drive Morgan City, LA 70380).* Wow. I sure do love me some soft and relaxed easy listening music. Look, I'm not going to sugarcoat the following observation or offer any constructive criticism here for that matter. I'm not going to pretend that I liked certain aspects of the record, nor will I say that the vocals really stood out as being exceptionally versed and well-written or that the band's live gigs must be a romping hoot. What I will say is that I'd rather be out back banging my sister than subject myself to perusing more of this piece of shit.

This may be overkill, but stop yourselves from ever listening to this band. Go ahead and read the fuckin' Yellow Pages instead. Seriously. (CD)-**Manic**

**Colin McShane** "Songs to Make You Feel" *(Colin McShane, www.myspace.com/colinmcshane)*. Hey now, it's a singer/songwriter that doesn't suck! Mister McShane is not trying to be an established artist—he writes songs that are his own and sings them in his own voice, which is a welcome break from the Tom Waits/Dave Matthews/Bob Dylan imitations I hear. Although the songs are extremely emotionally charged, they don't resort to the sappy drivel that withers flowers. Actually, there's some rockin' goin' on. Works for me. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

**Converge** "No Heroes" *(Epitaph, 2798 Sunset Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90026)*. Converge has been a great band for a long time, but the one thing they will never escape is their dependence on a style of music created by Rorschach, Born Against and Kiss It Goodbye. It's okay—a lot of acts exist because of that stable of bands, but Converge is the one that really took that approach and made it their own. With *No Heroes*, the band has returned to their earliest sound, and in my eyes, wrote the second full-length Kiss It Goodbye album that was never recorded. It's like they stole the secret sheet music from Kiss It Goodbye, tweaked it to be their own, and recorded the album. It isn't a bad thing by any stretch; I love all those bands and I'm truly glad someone is carrying on that great tradition. It is just eerie how similar the music is, but how original it is in the same breath. The most original thing is Bannon's vocals. The venom he spits on this album even outdoes himself at moments, and is far more bloodcurdling that what Charles Maggio or Tim Singer did back in the day. Each generation has its great pioneers, and those pioneers learned from those that came before. Converge is this era's Einstein, and now we wait for the next great mind to show itself. (CD)-**Myk**

**The Copyrights** "Button Smasher" *(It's Alive, 11411 Hewes St., Orange, CA 92869)*. I'm not sure what more I can say about these guys that wasn't covered in their later review (which is actually the one I wrote first), but I'll tell you that as good as *Nowhere Near Chicago* is, *Button Smasher* is even better. Think early Screeching Weasel meets the Midwestern appeal of Dillinger Four, with Danny Vapid circa Sludgeworth era on vocals and you have The Copyrights. Purchase this 7" and while you're at it, hand over your hard-earned dough for their two full-lengths that are a necessary part of any punk's record collection. (7")-**McClernon**

**The Copyrights** "Nowhere Near Chicago" *(It's Alive, 11411 Hewes St., Orange, CA 92869)*. Why is it that the best Pop Punk bands seem to come out of Illinois? Well, while The Copyrights hail from Carbondale—which as the title here states, is nowhere near Chi-town—but they might be the heirs to the throne vacated by the demise of Screeching Weasel. The only band right now that might be better in the Pop Punk genre than the Copyrights is the Ergs! and it's a damn close battle for the top spot. The Copyrights possess everything that a good melodic Punk band should: unmatched energy, insanely catchy hooks and snotty vocals galore. On this four-song EP the band covers one song from each member's old band and re-does it the way the Copyrights would've written it; it's brilliant and perfect in every way. If you're a fan of the genre, this band is one of the best, I promise you. (7")-**McClernon**

**Count the Hours** "We Don't Care" *(Panic, POB 23306, Seattle, WA 98102)*. Solid melodic Hardcore here with enough venom to balance out the more upbeat tendencies. The fast paced '88-style format is in effect, but this record is laced with an abundance of hook-prone passages and breakneck percussion which keeps the adrenaline level high. Harmonic leads coat brawny riff arrangements, recalling bands of the Faded Grey/Stay Gold mold, but with a darker, more hostile (dare I say punker) edge. Hoarse cries of depression abound, while the guitar onslaught, a solid blend of tuneful discord, holds it all together. (CD)-**Ramek**

**Communique** "Walk Into the Light" *(Sabot, POB 28, Gainesville, FL 32602)*. After an excellent full-length in *Poisoned Arrows*, Communique returns with this five-song EP to whet the appetites of their fans in anticipation of their second album to be released next year. Communique rose out of the ashes of one of the best East Bay Punk bands in recent memory, American Steel, whose *Rogue's March* LP is still one of my favorite records. I couldn't wait to hear what Communique was all about after the demise of AmSteel, and at first I was a bit disappointed with the direction they were taking, which was decidedly New Wave, but with every record they release, the more I'm loving it, and this EP is no different. In fact, I'd wager that *Walk Into the Light* is the best thing they've created to date. With all the New Wave Punk bands or Dance Punk bands around today, it's hard to separate the wheat from the chaff, but I can assure you that Communique are certainly one of the best. They pull off the Depeche Mode/Joy Division sound better than almost all of them, while retaining a sizable amount of East Bay Punk in their sound. While the raspy vocals of American Steel are a distant memory, the silky smooth voice here is perfect for their sound. A great EP, from start to finish. (CD)-**McClernon**

**DOA** "Bloodied But Unbowed...The Damage to Date: 1978-1982" *(Alternative Tentacles, POB 419092, San Francisco, CA 94141-9092)*. One of the longest-running, hardest-working Punk bands EVER add to their amazing catalog here with a compilation of tunes covering four years in their early career. As the band responsible for two of my favorite records of all time, *Hardcore 81* and *Something Better Change*, Joey "Shithead" Keithley and company can basically do no wrong. Hell, even their most recent material is stellar, though it's the stuff present on this disc that warms the cockles of my heart. The 19 songs here are some of the finest pure Punk Rock tunes ever penned, as well as some of the most covered, such as "The Prisoner," "Fuck You" and "Rich Bitch." There's also "Fucked Up Ronnie," which I believe the band caught a lot of flack from conservatives for at the time. While DOA is known by all, I constantly run into people that never got around to listening to them or flat-out ignored them, which I'll never understand. Whatever the case, it's a travesty that a band who's been DIY from the outset (read Keithley's book, *I, Shithead* if you don't believe me) aren't the most popular Punk band alive, especially since they have the tunes to back it up. (CD)-**McClernon**

**Damage Case** "Tyranny" *(Punk Core, POB 916, Middle Island, NY 11953)*. Is it just me, or does my CD player keep repeating the first song over and over? Hmmmm, nope. I see. While Damage Case's Hardcore is fast, brutal, raging and heavy, they seem to have one song and they're stickin' to it. It gets a bit ridiculous after a while. Like, how do the band members know which song they're on? Ah! I get it! It doesn't matter because they're all the same! Why bother learning another riff when you can play the same one? Hey, it works for Bad Religion! There's always room for another band that completely lacks creativity! (CD)-**chuck.foster**

**The Damascus Intervention** "Carefully Built/Carefully Destroyed" *(Tribunal, POB 49322, Greensboro, NC 27449)*. Fucking Christ! North Carolina has turned into the most twisted development camp for brutal American underground music. Killwhitneydead wasn't good enough, so then we got the Demonstration. Now we have to contend with The Damascus Intervention, one of the most amazing mixtures of Grindcore and Swedish style Death Metal you'll hear anywhere. This is some absolutely brutalizing audio output with insanely difficult riffs, hyper-fast blast beats and a set of vocal

chords that sound like a cat gut bow pulled the wrong way on a violin string. The is the side of a band like Dillinger Escape Plan that leans more towards total brutality and farther away from pretentious Art-Rock Metal that many bands have embraced today. If you're into bands like Darkest Hour, you have to check this out—it's American Metal does Swedish Metal, with an extra dose of "fuck you" in it. (CD)-**Myk**

**Dance Floor Justice** "Breaking the Silence" *(Double Or Nothing, POB 24913, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33307).* With former members of Until the End, Where Fear and Weapons Meet, Destro and All Hell Breaks Loose, you'll have a good idea of what Dance Floor Justice sounds like. The remind me a lot of Most Precious Blood, but the vocals sound more like Indecision when Tom Sheehan was still in the band, or at least a cross between Tom and Dan O'Mahony from No For An Answer. Musically, Dance Floor Justice isn't actually as heavy as the members' previous bands, or many of their Florida contemporaries. They are a heavier version of the early Revelation Hardcore sound with just a hint of the more modern breakdowns and power chord mosh parts. Actually, the band name is a little misleading, as I expected some super-heavy, mosh-inflated beatdown style of Hardcore that I tend not to care for, but that isn't the case. If you were into bands like Undertow, Outspoken and Strife, Dance Floor Justice will bring back those days. (CD)-**Myk**

**The Dear Hunter** "Act 1 The Lake South The River North" *(Triple Crown, www.triplecrownrecords.com).* I'm all for bands and artists trying something different, but before you go ahead and put it to tape, at least think about whether it's even a good idea; this most certainly is not. Even if I could look past the pretentious album title, The Dear Hunter is still boring as all hell and not worth anyone's time. The Dear Hunter is the brainchild of the former guitarist and vocalist of The Receiving End of Sirens, a band I've heard of but never heard, mainly because the name of the band itself just pissed me off. At least I took a listen to this before completely writing it off, and unfortunately what I found was piano-driven, whiny Pop music that tries to come across as deep and meaningful, but to dullards like myself it's just whiny Pop music that has no business in a Rock mag. (CD)-**McClernon**

**Deep Sleep** "You're Screwed" *(Grave Mistake, POB12482, Richmond, VA 23241)* .Grave Mistake hits another one out of the ballpark with this nine-song 7" EP. Yup, you heard correctly, nine songs on a 7". Deep Sleep are the second coming of bands like Black Flag, Adolescents and early Descendents. This quartet has that early '80's SoCal Punk sound down to a "T." Every time I put this on I hear "Police Story" or "Amoeba," and a smile instantly comes to my face. Fuck it's good. (7")-**McClernon**

**Deicide** "The Strength of Redemption" *(Earache, 43 West 38th St.., 2nd Fl, New York, NY 10018).* This the debut of Jack Owen and Ralph Santolla playing with Deicide and I, for one, think it's the best move they could have made. While Deicide had mastered the Florida style of Death Metal, that was also all they could play; there was little deviance from the sound that made them a household name. *The Strength of Redemption* still maintains the same tone as the classic albums, but also features an injection of the new members' other ventures. The Death and Iced Earth elements, while not prominent, make such an impact on the song writing it's undeniable. There are massive amounts of melody that would never have been found on a Deicide album previous to this, and Benton's vocals have been transformed to some degree, just as they were on the Vital Remains outing. Glen needed a kick in the ass and this was it. He needed an outside perspective, and with two members with strong backgrounds giving it, we get the best Deicide album since *Once Upon the Cross*. (CD)-**Myk**

**Die Hunns** "You Rot Me" *(Volcom, 1740 Monrovia Ave., Costa Mesa, CA 92627).* Straying from the conventional and straightforward Punk Rock formula that seemed to sum up the band on their previous releases, *You Rot Me* proves to be one of the Hunns' stronger musical efforts as it showcases a slightly more unique and evolved sound. This album is unlike anything that the band has released in the past, combing both male and female fronted vocals with an emphasis on stripped down Rock n' Roll energy that can be traced back to the '60s and early '70s. Mr. Peters hasn't dulled one bit, and with the aid of bassist Corey Parks (ex-member of Nashville Pussy) in the vocal department, there's not much that this band can't accomplish. (CD)-**Manic**

**Die Hunns** "You Rot Me" *(Volcom, 1740 Monrovia Ave., Costa Mesa, CA 92627).* Yay! I'm always happy to receive a new Duane Peters CD—just what I need to accompany my Schaefer and me. I liked the first Hunns album, despite its tendency to sound a bit Clash-y. This time around, the songwriting has solidified into something more mainlined into the early '70s (and more up my alley) somewhere between Lou Reed, The Pagans and The Runaways, not to mention the heavy Rolling Stones/New York Dolls influence. As to be expected, Duane and bassist Corey Parks split the vocal duties, even taking entire songs for themselves, giving the album a nice touch of unpredictability absent from a lot of recent bands. Whether being introspectively mellow or rockin' with a sneer, Die Hunns have created an excellent album that points the way to a highly productive future. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

**Die Berbannten Kinder Evas** "Dusk and Void Came Alive" *(Napalm, POB 153220, Austin, TX 78715).* Die Berbannten Kinder Evas features Richard Lederer, who's better known as part of Summoning, doing his own orchestral music. I know it's big for members of Black Metal bands to do their own solo works, and I usually applaud people that have side projects to do pieces that don't fit their main band, but this just doesn't do anything for me; it's chamber music at best. I feel like I should be in a cathedral and listening to the girl who sings from the balcony all the way in the back. At times it actually reminds me of the soundtrack from the film *The Cook, The Thief, His Wife and Her Lover* when the little albino kid is singing. I love that film, but never in a million years would I listen to the soundtrack; I think that extends to this CD as well. Napalm has an extremely diverse roster of Goth and Metal, which I applaud them for, but this is just too artsy fartsy for me. (CD)-**Myk**

**Diecast** "Internal Revolution" *(Century Media, 2323 W. El Segundo Blvd., Hawthorne, CA 90250).* Diecast has evolved over the years, both due to natural progression and new members in the band. Their move towards melodic Metal a la Killswitch Engage will certainly elicit claims of selling out due to their stylistic transition, but let's look at this for what it is. Sounds like a plan. (CD)-**KevTV**

**Demise of Eros** "Neither Storm Nor Fire Nor Quake" *(Strike First, www.strikefirstrecords.com).* The melodic Metal romp, unholy bastard child of In Flames, Maiden, and watered down Metalcore, was originally propagated by bands of the Darkest Hour/Shadows Fall mold and subsequently glossed to a pop-sheen by legions of opportunists posing as Hardcore bands. It may not have been quite so dismal to begin with, but at this point the schtick is unbearable. Demise of Eros provide little respite from the dismal status quo, with their slick Metal-prone chuggery, lyrical drudgery, and double bass trickery. The band never rips particularly, but rest assured this record is crammed with enough hooks to make the endeavor FM-radio digestible. Make no mistake about it: this is not Hardcore, this is just bad Metal. Technically sound, but lousy nonetheless. Listen to Rorschach instead. (CD)-**Ramek**

**Dirty Pictures** "Hollywood High" *(Pascal, 11864 Ventura Blvd.,*

*#906, Studio City, CA 91604).* What a cool album cover! There's a pin-up girl in a Betty Page pose and lotsa leopard print. There's one of those picture wheels—you know, the kind where you turn the side and it changes a picture in the middle of the cover. I can make the pin-up girl's breasts be in a bikini, or in tassels, or bare, or eight balls, or melons, or rubber nipples or with sort of weird metal abstraction. I can play with this for hours! Too band the music totally sucks! Happy-go-lucky Hollywood swinger Pop Punk—I can hear the smiles on their faces. Ugh. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

**Dreadful Children** "Dot to Dot…" *(Street Anthem, 1530 Locust St. PMB 218, Philadelphia, PA 19102).* Well, they got the "dreadful" part right. Okay, okay, it's not THAT bad (had to do it), but it's not that good, either. Street Punk ain't my thing—neither are the Toy Dolls. Oi, oi, oi? Yawn, yawn, yawn is more like it. I could definitely do without the Van Halen-esque guitar acrobatics, too. I never owned plaid pants with too many zippers. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

**Drop Dead, Gorgeous** "In Vogue" *(Rise, POB 135, Roseburg, OR 97470).* These kids are exactly that—kids. They're barely out of high school, and a couple never graduated. But yet, here they are putting together riffs that people 10 years their senior couldn't figure out. They have an ear for current music. Obviously, since this is their debut offering, I don't know if they grasp any other style of music, but when it comes to bands like Senses Fail, Saosin, Norma Jean and Bullet For My Valentine (to name a few) these kids get it. They have clean vocals, they have the screams, they have ear-piercing guitar parts, thrashy parts and mellow parts that lead into blistering solos and breakdowns. Every bit is here, and they're as technically as adept as any band you'll find. Fans out there of bands like Atreyu, From First to Last, Rise Against and Underoath, if these guys aren't on your radar yet, they will be. (CD)-**Myk**

**Elephone** "The Camera Behind the Camera Behind the Camera" *(Three Ring, POB 883123, San Francisco, CA 94188).* Elephone present the listener with a sleekly polished audio jewel that effervescently evokes the colorfully charismatic sounds of The Cure, Radiohead, REM, Live, and the jingle-jangle paisley movement of the mid-1980s. Radiant satellite-transmitted guitar progressions intricately flitter throughout a beautifully balanced blend of soothing richly textured and, at times, brashly dominating rhythms, shimmering dazzle-sparkle melodies, and the vocals of Jesus on resurrection day. Elephone are the living musical embodiment of pure unabashed perfection brought to you in a swath of everlasting mystic hope. (CD)-**Moser**

**The Electric Kisses** *(Full Breach Kicks, 2060 N. California Ave., Chicago, IL 60647).* I've hitched a ride on a time machine and I've found myself at the Masque in LA in the summer of 1979. The place reeks of piss, beer, vomit and sweat and the crowd is digging the FFM ménage a trios onstage—the M is playing guitar. The songs are Ramones-esque—simple, kinda dumb, but passionate in the way that Eric Clapton is not. Sigh. The Electric Kisses are really a new band from Seattle, of all places, though they sure as hell sound like a Power Pop Punk band from LA back in the day. Songs like "I Hate Retail" and "Don't Really Care" cement the sound. Very kewl. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

**Estradasphere** "Palace of Mirrors" *(The End, 94 Bogart St., Brooklyn, NY 11206).* According to the liner notes in the CD, "Estradasphere holds the door for our individual and collective understand of music." Can we get a little bit more pretentious, please? Wait! Let me grab my turtleneck and my beret and lets meet at the local socialist coffeehouse to discuss it! In all seriousness, yes, the musicianship on this disc is quite impressive, blending Gypsy World Music with Jazz, Italian movie soundtracks and Heavy Metal. Unfortunately, like most Prog Rock, it's nothing I'd ever care to actually listen to, unless I happened to wander into a hipster bar in Brooklyn and the music was buried way in the background beneath the boisterous beer bantering. Tortoise they ain't, although they're definitely trying. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

**The Exploding Hearts** "Shattered" *(Dirtnap, 2615 SE Clinton St., Portland, OR 97202).* In July 2003, three quarters of The Exploding Hearts were killed when their van crashed while returning to their hometown of Portland, Oregon, from a series of shows in San Francisco. But the band's delightfully contagious music will noisily live forevermore, and *Shattered* is proof positive of The Exploding Hearts' immortal sonic legacy. The 16 songs contained herein represent the Hearts' brief recording career in the form of loads of unreleased material (outtakes and alternate mixes), as well as 7" releases and compilation cuts. This band undeniably excelled at creating some of the most infectious, addictive, and exemplary Power Punk Pop the world has ever known (heavy on jubilant Cheap Trick melodies and bouncy Generation X brattiness). If the energetic giddiness of summer sunlight could be harnessed onto a CD, *Shattered* would be the obvious result. Divinely titillating through and through! (CD)-**Moser**

**The Fags** "Light 'Em Up" *(Idol, POB 720043, Dallas, TX 75372).* If it were 1978, The Fags would be playing sold-out shows to thousands of screaming fans at Budokan Hall. With an infectiously dazzling array of crunchy sugar-candy rhythms, melodiously sparkling hooks and leads, jangly stratospheric riffs, and hoarse but pitch-perfect vocals, The Fags might come across to the casual listener as a topnotch imitation of Cheap Trick (with a smidgen bit of Soul Asylum and Paul Westerberg strewn throughout the mix). But The Fags assuredly stand on their own as champion creatively skilled Power Pop musicians and song craftsmen destined to musically make their mark on the world while possibly influencing a new generation of bands to continue carrying the Pop Rock torch into the future and beyond. Yep, The Fags have lit up my ears like a Christmas tree, and I'm now and forever giddy-happy-insane-a-go-go! (CD)-**Moser**

**Faulter** "Darling Buds of May" *(Abacus, 2333 S. Van Ness, Suite 102 Hawthorne, CA 90250).* Just like any other quasi-mainstream band whose album was released within the past two years, Faulter lacks any originality and were more than likely signed in a hurry after their sound was carefully crafted by a crack shot team of record execs. This album is all filler; it lacks any luster or substance, which of course means this band will be a rousing success on MTV. (CD)-**Manic**

**Faulter** "Darling Buds of May" *(Abacus, 12333 S. Van Ness, Hawthorne, CA 90250).* This is the kind of band that everyone expects to be huge. The lead singer reminds me of John Waite, and the music is the typical Post-Emo/Weezer Rock music that so many bands play. Faulter is another in a long line of bands that are talented and write decent songs, but are forgotten the minute the CD is over because you can't tell them apart from any of the other bands just like them. You can even imagine a video for them: guy sitting on a chair backwards playing his guitar to flash of an ex-girlfriend and when the song is over, he leans the guitar against the chair and walks out of the room and it is all shot in monochrome. I wasn't even inspired enough to change the disc; the music just evoked no response whatsoever. (CD)-**Myk**

**Fear of Eternity** "Ancient Symbolism" *(Moribund, 530-A 19th St., Port Townsend, WA 98368).* The drippy logo, black and white photos of forests, the title of the album—it's laughable Black Metal time! Their press release says "Atmospheric Black Metal God!" and that makes me chuckle. I swear it also says, "Dreary cover art sure to catch the eye of every black metal fan." AMAZING. That's what I

look for—stereotypical cover art to point me in the direction of the CD best suited for future moments of self-pity. I'm convinced that Black Metal is just some huge inside joke; nobody can be **this** serious. This is a typical one-man Black Metal group that wants to be likened to Burzum, but just comes off sounding like the soundtrack to a video game behind vocals that sound like someone trying to talk while getting a root canal. (CD)-**KevTV**

**Few and the Proud** "Stampede" *(Organized Crime, POB 213, Brookfield, IL 60513).* I'll admit it. If I knew nothing about this band, upon first listen I would have guessed they were from Boston and not Chicago. The band sounds a lot like later Slapshot mixed with early Blood For Blood. The Slapshot part is the vocals for sure. The tone is so much like Choke's, I wouldn't be surprised if I was told he and this vocalist were brothers. Musically, this is classic Hardcore, but the guitars has more of a Sheer Terror vibe than a Slapshot feel—maybe they're just a little heavier, or tuned down, I'm not exactly sure on that, but it gives this album a much doomier sound than *Back On the Map*. So, for all you people looking for a new release that should say "Taang!" on the back, Few and the Proud is for you. (CD)-**Myk**

**Fight Like Hell** "Rabid As Wolves" *(Spook City, POB 34891, Philadelphia, PA 19101).* Coming from Denver, Fight Like Hell initially remind me of the wave of Hardcore that really became popular with Victory's rise to prominence. Bands like Indecision, Shutdown, Inner Strength and Outspoken all come to mind on parts of this album, but there's also an added element here that sets Fight Like Hell apart—there's a larger interest in the song structures. While the band uses breakdowns, speedy riffs and gang vocals for a large majority of the time, there's stronger musicianship here, illustrated by excellent guitar solos, more complicated song structures, and, seemingly, a knowledge of Classic Rock riffs. While I'm not ready to put Fight Like Hell in a "pioneering" class of bands at this point, they definitely have a shining future should they explore these more interesting parts of their songs. As it stands, it is a nice return to a more classic style of Hardcore that should appeal to fans of Youngblood Records and early bands from Victory. (CD)-**Myk**

**Folsom** *(Spook City, POB 34891, Philadelphia, PA 19101).* Spook City has some of the toughest bands I've heard in recent years, hard as nails and extremely reminiscent of the late '80's Hardcore scene in general. Folsom lives up to that bill exactly. Without having seen a picture of the band you picture huge guys with basketball jerseys and a crowd full of kickboxing experts beating the shit out of each other. The huge breakdowns in the songs won't for one second deter this image either. Bands like 25 Ta Life and Skarhead instantly come to mind, as do the earliest days of Hatebreed. If you like kicking shit hard to current bands like Sworn Enemy and Righteous Jams, then Folsom are right down your alley. (CD)-**Myk**

**Four Star Alarm** *(Thick, www.thickrecords.com).* An excellent five-song debut from these Chicago veterans. Featuring guitarist Jeff Dean of The Bomb and The Story So Far, Four Star Alarm extends that Midwestern Chicago Punk sound that made Naked Raygun and Pegboy so popular. Melodic in all the right places, but with a tough blue collar edge to it, Four Star Alarm come off as genuine and unpretentious—they're just some dudes who like to write Punk Rock with no greater aspirations in mind. I find Four Star Alarm refreshing. (CD)-**McClernon**

**Gatsby's American Dream** *(Fearless, 11785 Cardinal Circle, Garden Grove, CA 92843).* I don't know what it is about this band, but they just really appeal to me, which is saying tons considering I loathe almost anything that sounds remotely similar. Gatsby's American Dream would most likely be lumped into the Emo category, but with intricate time changes and an unsurpassable energy to rock out, they continue to land a step above the millions of bands that wish were them. Gatsby's American Dream remind me an awful lot of the band Classic Case, who coincidentally are working on their next album for Fearless. In my opinion, Gatsby's American Dream are the Emo band it's okay to like, something that I personally never thought even possible. (CD)-**McClernon**

**Goatwhore** "A Haunting Curse" *(Metal Blade, 2828 Cochran St. #302, Simi Valley, CA 93065).* I didn't think it would be this easy, but Goatwhore has left me little to divulge. This album sounds like Celtic Frost. Not shitty Frost, it's like a cross between *To Megatherion* and Bathory. The grinding, razor-like guitar and Ben Falgoust's vocals have this Tom Warrior meets Quarthon quality that's amazing. Musically, there's so much classic Black Metal going on, one would think these guys were a band for the last 20 years. I'm ecstatic that Ben does two bands, because this sounds nothing like Soilent Green and our lives are better for the fact that there are two entities delivering brutal but brilliant Metal. If you thought only Warhammer could deliver classic era sounding Frost/Hellhammer, think again. (CD)-**Myk**

**God Dethroned** "The Toxic Touch" *(Metal Blade, 2828 Cochran St. #302, Simi Valley, CA 93065).* I've loved this band from the first set of notes I ever heard them play. Once again, they pummel the listener with an abrasive drum battery and throaty vocals that are unmistakable. The band tried to do something a little different this time, diversifying the drums and rhythms a bit, and it totally works. The guitar attacks are powerful, but at the same time manage a melodic beauty that few Death Metal bands could ever attempt, never mind accomplish. Don't get me wrong, God Dethroned don't sound like they're from Gothenburg, but they're a true Death Metal band that's managed to infuse their songs with a classic Metal sound that gives body and distinction to these songs. If you like bands like The Crown, this album will blow you away. (CD)-**Myk**

**Graf Orlock** "Destination Time Yesterday" *(Level Plane, POB 726, Barnegat, NJ 08005).* Level Plane just can't do any wrong. Add to their always eclectic roster Graf Orlock, a Grindcore band that uses quotes from all of your favorite movies in all of their songs. From *Dusk Till Dawn* and *Robocop* begin and interrupt bone crushing, loud guitars and rapid-fire beats. I'm sure this sounds humorous to many of you, and in some cases it is, but trust me when I say that this CD is great. Every song had me thrashing my body violently in every direction, and I listened to this disc in my **car**. I think that the song lyrics have something to do with the quotes, but I can't really understand them too well. That doesn't matter! This kicks ass for its sheer power and savagery. (CD)-**Schneider**

**The Grannies** "Gumjob" *(Wondertaker, POB 470153, San Francisco, CA 94147).* Returning with their latest full-length record are The Grannies, a band that's guaranteed to knock your fuckin' skirts right off. *Gumjob* boasts 13 tracks of simplistic yet biting Rock n' Roll-fueled, fist-pumping action. Songs like "Your Band Sucks," "Don't Step On My Tits" and the Devo classic "Gates of Steel" prove to be the necessary sparks needed to light that tinder under your ass and get you up n' moving. It's nice to see a group of guys that don't take themselves too seriously. The Grannies prove once again that this band's got balls, even if they all do dress like my grandmother. (CD)-**Manic**

**Grave** "As Rapture Comes" *(Century Media, 2323 W. El Segundo Blvd, Hawthorne, CA 90250).* Grave is a band that seems to get the short end of the stick here in the US. People talk about Dismember and Entombed, but Grave always falls short of the conversation, which isn't fair since they were there in the beginning with those other bands as well. Well, I'm here to tell you that despite what you

may think of Grave in the past, this is one of the best albums they've ever done; it's brutally heavy, containing nothing but solid, traditional Swedish Death Metal, and the album is fucking good. Loa's vocals are absolutely grinding and powerful without slipping into any silly sounding screams or lackluster moments. The guitar work on this album has a Slayer meets Entombed sort of vibe, but still maintains enough sludgy slowness to avoid sounding like Thrash. I can't possibly convey how amazing an effort this is, especially for a band that's celebrating their fifteenth anniversary since the release of their debut. Some things get better with age, and Grave is one of them. (CD)-**Myk**

**The Heads** "Under the Stress of A Headlong Dive" *(Alternative Tentacles, POB 419092, San Francisco, CA 94141).* I haven't seen God yet, but I'm damn close. I'm so excited by this disc that my penis is ready to blast off into the Large Magellanic Cloud, never to return. Quite possibly the punkest Space Rock band ever, The Heads blend AmRep Helios Creed lysergic insanity with *Space Ritual*-era Hawkwind grooves, which they attack with the caustic abrasiveness of Karp, Hammerhead and the gritty fuzz of Halo of Flies. It's just about everything I'd ever want from a band, and I'm only pissed 'cause I didn't do it first. Even my cat's trippin' out—she's laying on my bed upside down, paws in the air, eyes darting all around the room. Audio catnip! (CD)-**chuck.foster**

**The Heart Attacks** "Hellbound and Heartless" *(Hellcat, 2798 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90025).* The story goes that Hellcat signed the Heart Attacks after Tim Armstrong fell in love with the group and after listening to *Hellbound and Heartless*, I can understand why. The Heart Attacks play the D Generation/New York Dolls/Heartbreakers-style of trashy Punk Rock near perfectly with a vocalist full of snot and blaring, razor-sharp guitar riffs that could cut through the hardest metal. When it comes to a great Rock n' Roll record, one of the most important components is energy, and The Heart Attacks are chock full of it, which is readily apparent on record, so I can only imagine what they would be like live. Seriously, this record oozes fun, booze and sex—what more can you ask for? (CD)-**McClernon**

**Her Candane** "No Battle!" *(Tribunal, POB 49322, Greensboro, NC 27449).* This is one of those bands that has a lot of weird timing and lots of screaming, but it doesn't necessarily mix well. It brings to mind the Isis remix records where things were deconstructed a bit and made for really weird parts. Her Candane do have some straightforward parts that are pretty heavily Hardcore-influenced, but then they have some Southern Rock influences as well. Really, what you have is a whole lot of parts, and not necessarily a true song—there are so many parts and so many divergent sounds that I tend to lose interest when listening. There are a lot of bands like that and people seem to like them, but I'm not really one of them. From my experience, fans of Mr. Bungle, Fantomas and the Ipecac label may really dig what's going on here. This is definitely a different kind of release for Tribunal. (CD)-**Myk**

**I** "Between Two Worlds" (*Nuclear Blast, 2323 W. El Segundo Blvd, Hawthorne, CA 90250).* I didn't know what to expect from this band. Sure it was a super group, but they're all members of Black Metal bands, and I is not a Black Metal band. Abbath has been performing in a Motorhead cover band in Norway, and it really shows here in his vocals. Gone for the most part is the fully guttural voice of Immortal, and in its place is a distinctly Lemmy style delivery which truly works for these songs. Also in the band is Isdale of Enslaved, TC King of Gorgoroth, Immortal Battery member Armagedda and also Demonaz. What that lineup would put out in your dreams is nothing like what you find here. This is a filthier Punk/Metal, closer to something you might find on a mid era War Fare album. I'm not complaining, especially since I love War Fare. Most of this album strikes me as closer to the English Punk bands than the Metal scene. If you've heard Satyricon covering Turbonegro, that's exactly what this album sounds like. Bands like Extreme Noise Terror, Discharge, Amebix and of course, Motorhead come to mind when listening to *Between Two Worlds*. If you like the old classics like Venom and Bathory, this will really stick with you as well. (CD)-**Myk**

**I Killed the Prom Queen** "Music For the Recently Deceased" *(Metal Blade, 2828 Cochran St. #302, Simi Valley, CA 93065).* I'm not an expert in Australian music by any stretch, but I'm pretty familiar with some of the bigger bands in the underground like Destroyer 666, Blood Duster, and recently signed to Epitaph band, Parkway Drive. But none of those prepared me for what I would find on the new I Killed the Prom Queen CD. Actually, having the band's first album didn't prepare me for the onslaught found here. Listening to this was like being a fan of Bleeding Through and hearing *This Is Love, This Is Murderous* for the first time; the band has just gone to another level. The band's sound sits somewhere between Bleeding Through, Atreyu and Iron Maiden. The majority of the song structures are European Death Metal style, and there are some cleaned up Hardcore parts that give it that Atreyu feel, but these guys are 100 times tougher. It would be like having a Grind vocalist fronting As I Lay Dying. But, holy shit can these guitar players play! They aren't messing around... their sonic attack is as impressive with their power chords as they are melodic on their solos. If you haven't heard these guys yet, you're in for something special. If you think the new Bleeding Through and Atreyu are missing something (like a set of nuts), this is the band for you. (CD)-**Myk**

**Ignite the Will** "Words Fail" *(Double or Nothing, POB 24913, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33307).* It's good to know that not every band coming out of Iowa sounds like Slipknot—they aren't **all** fooled into thinking that Slipknot is the true sound of Hardcore. Ignite the Will hail from Iowa City and kick a lot of ass, have monster guitar parts and a knowledge of classic Hardcore, not to mention a vocalist that sounds like *One Voice* era Roger Miret. This reminds me of a lot of the Crossover era bands like Agnostic Front, Madball, and later bands like The Hoods. This is a strong debut, and an excellent showing for a still new label. The music is tough as hell, but the lyrics are sincere and point in the right direction. This is the kind of band we need to support. (CD)-**Myk**

**Ihsahn** "The Adversary" *(Candlelight US, POB 707, Plymouth Meeting, PA 19462).* There will be a lot of people who are happy that this is not a new Peccatum album. While I didn't hate that group as much as others did, it wasn't my favorite. What I can say about the solo album is that it is A) not a return to Emperor, B) not as "Metal" as Zyklon, and C) extremely influenced by classic '80's Metal. The most obvious element of this album is the Mercyful Fate styling of Ihsahn's vocals; his range on this album is terrific and he uses it to the utmost. The song writing reminds me of several different '80's Metal bands and styles, from Thrash to Progressive, but it's the mimic of King Diamond that takes front and center here. It makes for a strong record and reveals where much of Ihsahn's direction came from. Definitely his best work since leaving Emperor. (CD)-**Myk**

**Into Eternity** "The Scattering of Ashes" *(Century Media, 2323 W. El Segundo Blvd., Hawthorne, CA 90250).* Wow. Into Eternity successfully crams a lot of different styles of Metal into each song, and it somehow doesn't sound forced. Blast beats, harmonies, growls, solos, intricate riffing, melody, choruses, and some Halford-esque yelps meet to create a beautiful Metal clusterfuck. My big complaint comes production-wise, as the vocals sound far too tinkered with and the bass drum doesn't pack the wallop that it

should. Musically though, this album is top-shelf and is both heavy on talent and creativity. Whereas many bands try the over-the-top approach and it sounds obscenely forced, Into Eternity manage to meld their influences into something enjoyable and uniquely all their own. (CD)-**KevTV**

**Ira** "The Body and the Soil" *(Go Kart, POB 20, New York, NY 10012).* While not my usual listening pleasure, Germany's Ira melds Sonic Youth experimentation's with melody with Sludge Rock ala The Melvins or later day Neurosis. Think Karp with more melody as another reference. It's really not too bad and while the songs drone on a bit too much for my liking, followers of the style might really enjoy this. (CD)-**McClernon**

**Irving** "Death In the Garden, Blood On the Flowers" *(Eenie Meenie, 8316 Melrose Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90069). Death In the Garden, Blood On the Flowers* is an intricately crafted, infectiously riveting display of unabashed Alt-Pop grandeur. While several of the songs possess a dark and brooding tone, the shimmering melodies and soaring harmonies shine forth like a vibrantly intoxicating tickle to the ears. If music were a three-ring circus, Irving would be the master of ceremonies in a big-top tent where The Beatles, The Kinks, The Smiths, Modern English, The Church, The House of Love, and Pavement are all featured performers. In other words, Irving have taken an eclectic array of influences aplenty and created one of the most brilliantly perfect Pop discs of our time. A standing ovation is certainly in order! (CD)-**Moser**

**Iscariot** "Lifeless Design" *(567, www.567records.com).* Ever wonder what it would be like to be attacked by one of those demons in *The Evil Dead*? It's probably pretty close to the sound on this CD. Sheer brutality sums it up best—a relentless attack from forces beyond nature. Teeth gnashing, flesh tearing, fists pounding, blood spraying... The body goes into shock and the pain is almost numbing. Enjoy your last moments alive. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

**It Dies Today** "Sirens" *(Trustkill, 23 Farm Edge Lane, Tinton Falls, NJ 07724).* Well, it ain't the worst Screamo album I've ever heard, but that doesn't mean I'm not dying to turn it off. Once again, recycled riffs, predictable patterns, sucky singing. Is it just me or are the kids completely clueless? Considering the amount of people who agree with me, I'm leaning toward the latter. Hell, I'll make it die today—press STOP! (CD)-**chuck.foster**

**Jello Biafra** "In the Grip of Official Treason" *(Alternative Tentacles, POB 419092, San Francisco, CA 94141-9092).* For those counting out there, this is spoken word album number eight from original Dead Kennedy's frontman Jello Biafra, and unless you're into hearing someone talk about politics for several hours, this ain't for you. However, if you're open-minded enough to listen to someone connect well-thought out diatribes, poems and anecdotes about Bush, Bin Laden, the war in general and conspiracy theories that aren't all that far-fetched, you need this. For the most part, Biafra comes off more than knowledgeable about the political nature of the world we live in and really has his finger on the pulse of the nation. At the same time however, I find some of this three disc set and its topics to be fairly ordinary and easy targets, with Biafra not really adding much of an alternate opinion than what I've heard before in more mainstream media. Of course, he doesn't need to, and he's entitled to his opinions, but I prefer when Jello concentrates on topics that are a little more subversive and kept hidden from the public eye. Overall though, Biafra comes off as funny on most occasions, is intelligent, and this is a great outlet for the members of the punk scene—both young and old—to learn about what's going on in the country. He has a knack for inspiring even the most jaded of us who rail against the country without knowing exactly why; Biafra's words now provide a reason for throwing that brick through a window, rather than lobbing it out of sheer boredom. (CD)-**McClernon**

**Jena Berlin** "Passion Waits As the Program Keeps Going" *(Watch the City Burn, 777 Brighton St., Philadelphia, PA 19111).* Very driven Post-Hardcore/Emo kinda of stuff that's aimed to appeal to fans of Boy Sets Fire, Texas is the Reason or Jets to Brazil. Maybe I'm just burnt out on this kind of stuff, but something tells me that folks would rather rock to the originators of this genre, but then again, what do I know? These kids probably mean well, but I just can't get into this. (CD)-**Andriani**

**Jesus Fucking Christ** *(Puke, POB 99456, Everyville, CA 94662/Inimical, POB 2803, Seattle, WA 98111).* Jesus Fucking Christ, aka JFC (which happens to be an anagram of my initials as well as my girlfriend's), is a Crust Supergroup of sorts. Check it out: Larry Rickets (The Rickets, The Trots, Hell After Dark, Deadly Weapons) on guitar/voice, Dave Ed (yeah, the bass player of Neurosis!) and Jamie Pyrata of Screw 32/Pitch Black on drums. Together they make some brutal Hardcore Punk a la Poison Idea or Negative Approach with the obvious Crust influence. Unlike a lot of Crusty stuff I hear as of late, there are real songs on this album with some thought behind them—not the typical, "BLAAAAAAH! Fuck the government!" shit. Some top notch playing in the rhythm section, too. Help kill Emo—buy this disc. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

**Johnny Action Figure** "Asks the Room to Please Stop Spinning" *(DRP, POB 6257, Wyomissing, PA 19610).* These guys are somewhere between singer/songwriters and Taking Back Sunday. The have a little more edge than your average acoustic playing troubadour, but they're missing the overtly Punk roots of a Taking Back Sunday or a Brand New. I wouldn't even call this Pop, or Pop-anything; there's way too much melody and feeling to drown it with that label, but the almost ballad-like qualities of these songs would also be done a disservice by calling this Emo. I guess if you wanted to compare Johnny Action Figure to Taking Back Sunday meets Oasis, you wouldn't be totally off base. While this is definitely not my scene, I could see fans of bands like Nightmare of You and others really getting into this. (CD)-**Myk**

**Kevin K** "Rockin' Roll Dynamite" *(Full Breach Kicks, 2060 N. California Ave., Chicago, IL 60647).* I really dug the previous Kevin K album I heard, *Perfect Sin*, for its dirty Lower East Side Rock n' Roll sound (think Thunders/Ramones). However, I knew I'd probably never listen to the disc again, so I gave it to my girlfriend. I'm holding on to **this** disc, though, 'cause it really kicks ass! The overall sound is reminiscent of Iggy Pop's *Instinct*, but where *Instinct* had a lot of shortcomings that made the album mediocre, Kevin K's songs are fully realized hard rockin' blasts of head bobbin' riffage and ass shakin' downbeats. I'd be lying if I didn't warn you about the cover of the Stooges' "Death Trip"—it made me cringe, but attaining the kind of psychotic fury eminent in the original is probably impossible, so I'm gonna let it slide. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

**The Killtakers** "This is What We Are" *(The Killtakers, www.thekilltakers.com).* One of the best up and coming bands out of the New York City area, The Killtakers take the Midwest, gritty, melodic Punk leanings of Dillinger Four and Off With Their Heads and combine it with a hint of the early '90's Dischord/Touch & Go noise, ala Fugazi, Hoover, Jesus Lizard, etc. On this five-song EP the style works incredibly well and veers away from any sort of formula. Seriously, how many bands do you know can harmonize a Pop melody over a wall of discordant noise, yet make it seem incredibly pleasant and violent all at the same time? The answer is very few, which makes The Killtakers' sound all the more refreshing. The band is heading into the studio to record more

material, so be on the lookout for it. (CD)-**McClernon**

**Know the Score** "All Time Low" *(Eulogy, POB 24913, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33307).* It isn't unusual to have a band with a throwback sound these days; actually, there are tons of them. But, to find one of those bands that truly captures the sound and feeling of yesteryear is a different story. Know the Score has 100% grabbed the feel of the early '90s and the sound that became known as "Crossover" or "Combat Core." Most notably these guys have that Ludichrist, Crumbsuckers, DRI sound, which is not a bad thing by any stretch in my mind. They do possess some elements that modernize them a bit during certain songs, but as a rule, this is as old school as you'll find. I fully support this band, as they've brought back a sound that was so near and dear to me, and done it honor and justice... not to mention they have one of the funniest song titles ever: "Ex-Members of I Don't Give A Fuck." (CD)-**Myk**

**Landmine Marathon** "Wounded" *(Level Plane, POB 726, Barnegat, NJ 08005).* Where does Level Plane find these bands? Landmine Marathon (that visual is fantastic—a bunch of yuppies sipping on water bottles running around a park, only to be randomly blown up) is an audio massacre, combining tortured screeching vocals with songs that combine grind and slower, torturous moments that will suit fans of either Converge or suicidal depression. (CD)-**KevTV**

**The Leftovers** "Party Tonight!" *(Cheapskate, 297 Stoodley Pl, Schnectady, NY 12303).* Yet another band making me believe that Pop Punk is back and stronger than ever. The Leftovers take their cues from the Ramones/Screeching Weasel/Queers school of thought, and play the style exceptionally well. There are nine songs here, and not one of them isn't insanely catchy and well-structured, with the "ooohs" and "ahhhs" strategically placed and not overdone, therefore not bordering on annoying. Hell, I heard even Ben Weasel loves these guys, and he doesn't like anything! (CD)-**McClernon**

**Libyan Hit Squad** "Death Metal In Jerusalem" *(Bony Orbit, 1318 S. Conway Rd., Orlando, FL 32812).* Holy fucking shit!!! This way-too-short four song EP kicks off with an amphetamine-fueled cover of "The Witch" by the Sonics, and doesn't let up until the end, by which time the Hit Squad has left your body full of drill holes as food for vultures somewhere in the Sahara. The following three songs rage alcoholic blasts of early '80's Hardcore Punk fury, like the MC5 if they had been influenced by Black Flag's *Damaged*. Just when I was afraid of what the next crappy Punk Rock album would bring me, I got this slab of intense raving genius. Thank you, Libyan Hit Squad. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

**The Lillingtons** "The Too Late Show" *(Red Scare, www.redscare.net).* File under, "things I've never thought would happen." The greatest thing to happen to Ramones-influenced Punk Rock since the heyday of Screeching Weasel and the Queers, the defunct until recently Lillingtons have returned with a powerhouse fourth LP that rivals that of their best effort, *Death By Television*. Fat Mike once referred to them as his favorite band and Ben Weasel said they were the best band he's heard since the Queers, so do I **really** need to try and sell you on them? But if you're not convinced yet, *The Too Late Show*, is nearly as good as *Death By Television*, better than *The Backchannel Broadcast*, and still focuses their attentions on spy movies and science fiction, which is a refreshing change over the usual Pop Punk matter of girls, love and girls. Hailing from Wyoming, you might wonder how the hell these guys ever got to be so fucking good (and to be honest, I have no clue), but it's safe to say that while these fellas from the distant lands of cow-tipping and corn-growing may never play another show again (which they've pretty much guaranteed), if this is the last we hear from them, it's the perfect swan song from an outstanding band. (CD)-**McClernon**

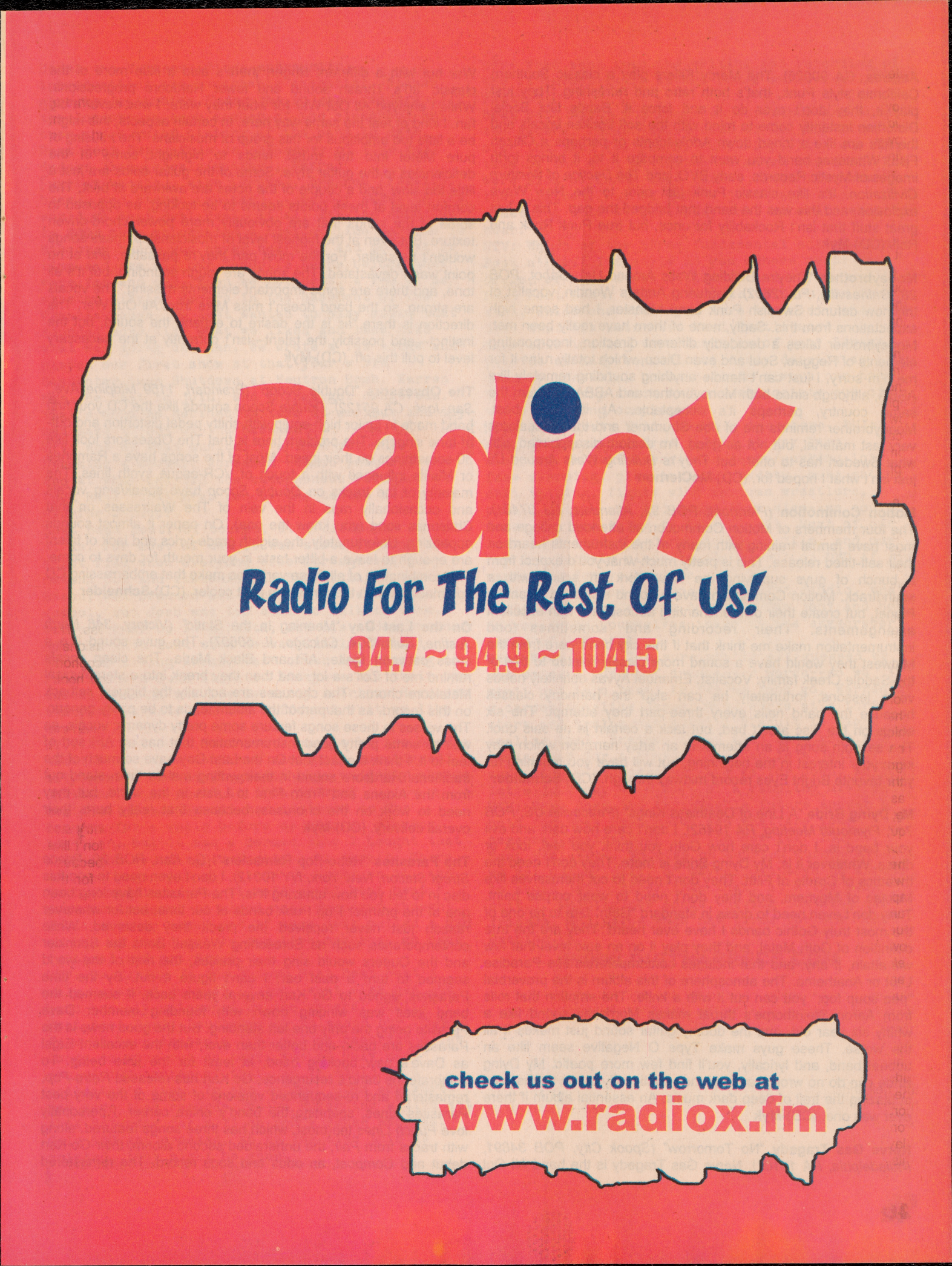
**Lion of Judah** "Universal Peace" *(Youngblood, POB 236, Ephrata, PA 17522).* Lion of Judah features members of Worn Thin, Desperate Measures and No Justice. Basically, the band is an amalgam of all the other bands on Youngblood. The album was recorded by Don Zientara at Inner Ear, and because it's on Youngblood you can count on the fact that it sounds like it's from the early '80s. Musically, this is a solid album, but I'm not a big fan of the vocals. The album reminds me a lot of demo era Shift and the singer sounds like a weak version of Josh. Lion of Judah is turning out to be one of my least favorite Youngblood bands that I've heard, because although it sounds old, it's just kind of weak and uninspiring. It's the kind of record that makes you want to go back and listen to the album that it reminds you of. I still fully support the label and their desire to perpetuate classic Hardcore, but this one is a miss in my book. (CD)-**Myk**

**Lion of Judah** "Universal Peace" *(Youngblood, POB 236, Ephrata, PA 17522).* When I say "DC," some of you may think of the charming man attempting to run our country, or maybe that skate shoe company, but what I am getting at is the unique, raw music that originated there many moons ago. Luckily for us, that sound is kept alive today with bands like Lion of Judah. This band puts a modern twist on that original Hardcore and Post-Hardcore sound from the area. They meld together the styles of both Minor Threat and Fugazi, without the presence of a force like Ian MacKaye. *Universal Peace* is, however, put together very well with good songs in a cohesive order. Although their influences may be too apparent in some cases, Lion of Judah is still able to hold their own as bearers of the DC lineage. (CD)-**Schneider**

**Looking Up** *(Panic, POB 23306, Seattle, WA 98102).* Looking Up play melodic Hardcore that balances Youth Crew with a wilder, more agitated delivery and some "modern" production gloss. The band fuses these aspects into a dramatic, if occasionally streamlined, assault that offers more than the standard cacophony of group-shout alongs and breakdowns. Creative riffing and hook-prone melody add notable elements to the equation, though this recording falls squarely within the confines of good old straight forward Hardcore. Fans of Sinking Ships, Betrayed, etc. take note of Looking Up. (CD)-**Ramek**

**Me First and the Gimme Gimmes** "Love Their Country" *(Fat Wreck Chords, POB 193690, San Francisco, CA 94119).* Everyone's favorite Punk Rock karaoke superstars are back, and this time the target they've locked in on is good ole' Country and Western. I've heard a lot of people grumbling that they don't like this record as much as the band's previous ones simply because they're not as familiar with the originals here as those for the tracks on, say, *Have A Ball* or *Blowin' In the Wind*, and I can see their point. But, judging this record based solely on the renditions the band does here, it's safe to say that *Love Their Country* is as fantastic—and of course, hysterical—as anything they've done before. True, you won't be singing along with every track right out of the gate like you may have done in the past, but give it time and you too might be shining up your spurs and looking for a cousin to make out with. And of course the best part of any Gimme Gimmes album is trying to find the cover within a cover, such as throwing "Astro Zombies" into the version of Willie Nelson's "On the Road Again," or the Damned's "Love Song" into "East Bound and Down." *Love Their Country* isn't my favorite Gimme Gimmes release, but I love it nonetheless, and you will too once you stop crying over the fact that you can't sing along to Billy Joel or Madonna on this one. (CD)-**McClernon**

**The Mercy Killers** "Bloodlove" *(Epitaph, 2798 Sunset Blvd, Los*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*Angeles, CA 90026).* The Mercy Killers play a classic Southern California style Punk, that's both retro and refreshing. They just play it, they don't over do it and force it. Bands like Social Distortion instantly come to mind with the soft spoken vocals and the riffs are like a toned down Adolescents or perhaps a Citizen Fish. Whatever band you want to compare it to, it brings forth images of Mystic Records, early BYO, and *The Decline of Western Civilization*. It's like classic Punk just prior to the New Wave explosion, and this was the band that bridged the gap. This is just great stuff that isn't Rockabilly for once, but true Punk Rock and Roll. (CD)-**Myk**

**Moneybrother** "They're Building Walls Around Us" *(Sabot, POB 28, Gainesville, FL 32602).* Featuring Anders Wendin, vocalist of the now defunct Swedish Punk band Monster, I had some high expectations from this. Sadly, none of them have really been met. Moneybrother takes a decidedly different direction, incorporating elements of Reggae, Soul and even Disco, which totally ruins it for me. I'm sorry, I just can't handle anything sounding remotely like ABBA, although since both Moneybrother and ABBA hail from the same country, perhaps it's acceptable. At its very best, Moneybrother reminds me of Joe Strummer and the Mescaleros very last material, but not as good. I'm seldom disappointed with what Sweden has to offer, but *They're Building Walls Around Us* just isn't what I hoped for. (CD)-**McClernon**

**Motion Commotion** *(Piermont, POB 91, Allendale, NJ 07401).* The four members of Motion Commotion all attended college and most have formal training with many of the instruments heard on their self-titled release. This is pretty much what you'd expect from a bunch of guys supplying the New York art scene with a soundtrack. Motion Commotion have a sound similar to Phantom Planet, but create their own enchanting atmosphere with excellent arrangements. Their recording and sometimes odd instrumentation make me think that if this city band were from the Midwest they would have a sound more closely related to that of the Saddle Creek family. Vocalist, Emanuel Ayvas definitely needs voice lessons; fortunately he can skip the harmony classes because the band nails every three-part they attempt. The six songs on the disc aren't bad, but lack a certain je ne sais quoi. The seventh song is an attempt at an artsy narration which may keep your interest in the beginning, but will have you reaching for your favorite Bright Eyes record midway through. (CD)-**Schneider**

**My Dying Bride** "A Line of Deathless Kings" *(Peaceville US, POB 707, Plymouth Meeting, PA 19462).* I don't care how dark and evil your band is. I don't care how Goth you think you feel, look or dress. Whatever it is, My Dying Bride is more. They don't need the theatrics of Cradle of Filth. They don't need to cut themselves like Maniac of Mayhem, and they don't need to wear corpse paint. They don't even need to dress in standard "Goth" fare to be one of the most truly Gothic bands I have ever heard. They are the true definition of Goth Metal, and they play it on an epic level that few will attain, if any, and that includes contemporaries like Paradise Lost or Anathema. The atmosphere of this album is the proverbial "pea soup fog;" you can cut it with a knife. The emotion that rolls from Aaron Stainthorpe's throat makes Morrissey sound like a whiny six year old, and the doomy guitar sound just makes it all the worse. These guys make Type O Negative seem like an upbeat band, and lyrically, you'll find few more poetic. My Dying Bride can do no wrong, and yet they continually trump themselves in blazing the trail of deep dark music. An essential album if there ever was one. (CD)-**Myk**

**Nerve Gas Tragedy** "No Tomorrow" *(Spook City, POB 34891, Philadelphia, PA 19101).* Nerve Gas Tragedy is the band All Out War but with a different singer; there's also a little more of the classic '80's Thrash sound and fewer Hardcore progressions. While I enjoyed All Out War for what they were, I was never a big fan. I kind of feel the same way here. In certain aspects, this might be a little too ambitious for this group of musicians. The infusing of pure Metal into the music tends to highlight some of the deficiencies in the guitar style. Some of the guitar solos are just a little too slow ,and a couple of the notes are awkward at best. The comfort level at these points seems to be lacking, as opposed to some of the songs that are obviously more power chord-driven texture. But even at the highest level of musicianship, these songs wouldn't be stellar. For the most part they're passable, and at no point was I devastated. The songs are tough sounding, but it's all tone, and there are some important elements missing. The vocals are strong, so the band doesn't miss Mike from All Out War. The direction is there, as is the desire to expand the sound, but the instinct—and possibly the talent—isn't currently at the necessary level to pull this off. (CD)-**Myk**

**The Obsessors** "Double Scoop" *(Braindart, 1159 Midpine Ave., San Jose, CA 95122). Double Scoop* sounds like the CD your first band made in junior high equip with shitty pedal distortion and out-of-tune singers. The problem here is that The Obsessors look like 30-somethings on their insert. Most of the songs have a Ramones or Misfits influence with a touch of VCR-esque synth lines. The majority of the tracks on *Double Scoop* have speak/sing vocals and occasionally raps in the vein of The Waitresses on that Christmas song (you know the one). On paper it almost sounds appetizing. Unfortunately, the eighth grade lyrics and lack of talent are enough to leave a bitter taste in your mouth for days to come. The combination of all those variables make that embarrassing CD you made back in the day seem a lot cooler. (CD)-**Schneider**

**On the Last Day** "Meaning In the Static" *(Victory, 346 North Justine, Suite 504, Chicago, IL 60607).* The guys sound like a cross between Ignite, AFI and Black Maria. The clean vocals remind me of Zoli's a lot, and then they break into a stereotypical Metalcore chorus. The choruses are actually the biggest setback on this record, as that part of the album tends to be pretty generic. The verses in these songs feature some pretty dynamic vocals, as well as some pretty good instrumentation that has an AFI sort of feel to it. I think the fact that On the Last Day have so much of the traditional Hardcore sound in their writing makes them stand out from the Aidens and From First to Lasts in the world, but they need to work on the choruses, because that really hurts their overall delivery. (CD)-**Myk**

**The Parasites** "Retro-Pop Remasters" *(Go Kart, POB 20, Prince Street Station, New York, NY 10012).* I don't even need to pop this disc in to tell you how amazing it is. The Parasites have long been one of the premier Pop Punk bands of our time, but for whatever reason just never received the credit they deserved. While contemporaries such as Screeching Weasel, Boris the Sprinkler and the Queers would sing their praises, the rest of the world seemed to turn a deaf ear; I can't figure it out. By the time Parasites signed to Go Kart several years back, it seemed the band itself was winding down with founding member Dave Parasite being the only one left standing. But the good news is the Parasites are back, and better than ever, with the excellent Ergs! as Dave's new backing band, at least for the time being. To celebrate the band's resurgence, Go Kart has released *Retro-Pop*, remastered and re-sequenced versions of some of the very best Parasites tunes, spanning the band's entire career. I personally love *Punch Lines* the most, which has three songs featured, along with tracks from *Pair*, the unheralded second album, their Go Kart debut and *Compost*, an odds and sods record. The remastered

versions of these tracks sound incredible, and for any fan who's had a tough time tracking down all their favorite Parasites tracks, thank Greg and co. at Go Kart. (CD)-**McClernon**

**Parkway Drive** "Killing With A Smile" *(Epitaph, 2798 Sunset Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90026).* This is the debut album from this Australian Metal/Hardcore act. The album was recorded by Adam from Killswitch Engage and is unapologetically heavy. Bands like Shadow's Fall, All That Remains and Acacia Strain come to mind when listening to *Killing With A Smile*. The majority of the album is as heavy as can be, but it does have the occasional clean part and the breakdowns have a sound that either makes you want to kill someone or duck and cover 'cause you're about to get your ass kicked. This might be the heaviest band that Epitaph has ever signed—they give Converge a run for their money in that department. Between these guys and I Kill The Prom Queen, Australia is starting to produce one formidable roster of Metalcore bands to look out for. (CD)-**Myk**

**Phantom Frank** *(Musick, POB 1757, Burbank, CA 91507).* Damn, I haven't heard a good new Instrumental Surf album in a while—probably since Man...Or Astroman? lost it. Well, Phantom Frank, lead guitarist of Holland's Treble Spankers, has come to rectify the situation, bringing some interesting elements to the table as well. See, Mr. Frank effortlessly blends Middle Eastern, Indian and Krautrock influences (several nods to Kraftwerk) into his lazy beach and cattle driving soundscapes. Not surprisingly, this makes for some excellent lackadaisical listening, perfect for a day of umbrella drinks and shish kebab. So, wanna buy the first round? (CD)-**chuck.foster**

**Pilot Scott Tracy** "We Cut Loose" *(Alternative Tentacles, POB 419092, San Francisco, CA 94141-9092).* Formed out of the ashes of the Causey Way, Pilot Scott Tracy carries on that band's fine tradition of silly New Wave-influence Punk ditties. For fans of Devo, Siouxsie and the Banshees and the B-52's, you really can't go wrong with this. There's even a Smith's cover ("There Is A Light That Never Goes Out"). While I enjoyed the disc and its fun-filled antics, it started to loose me about three quarters of the way through, which might be my ADD kicking it in. (CD)-**McClernon**

**Pound For Pound** "For Our Fallen Brothers" *(Surprise Attack, www.surpriseattackrecords.com).* Sure, it's heavy and well produced, but when the main ingredient is testosterone-fueled Metalcore, who really cares? Though hailing from Illinois, Pound For Pound's take on Hardcore mirrors that of the current Northeastern Metal/Hardcore crop, a thick barrage of rhythmic chugs set at mid-pace lumber, indistinguishable bellicose yowls, and "tough" ranting. As might be expected, there is an over-reliance on E-chord mosh at the expense of the driving force that makes Hardcore/Punk dangerous and memorable. (CD)-**Ramek**

**Ratos De Porao** "Homem Inimigo Do Homem" *(Alternative Tentacles, POB 419092, San Francisco, CA 94141-9092).* Their first release since 2003, *Homem...* marks this Brazilian band's twenty-fifth anniversary and judging by this recording, they have made no indication that they're slowing down anytime soon. Melding early '80's Hardcore with the Trash/Metal coming out at that same time, Ratos De Porao harken back to a time where what you wore wasn't as important as what you said (though to be fair in this case, I have no fucking idea what they're saying, but they sound pretty genuine about it), and they're damn good at it too. (CD)-**McClernon**

**Reality Serum** "Here We Go" *(Supple, POB 212, Hicksville, NY 11802).* Here's something completely different. Reality Serum are an Ambient Hip Hop duo carving their own genre called "Trans-urban." It's almost a Goth version of Rap—a description that isn't meant as an insult, and shouldn't be taken as one. Twizle's music pulses and swirls in delay to Comanche's rapid-fire mic delivery. From my end, this three-song CD is a welcome departure from the minimalist lunkhead Hip Hop that dominates the airwaves today, harkening back to the full production of Dr. Dre or the Bomb Squad. Granted, the lyrics are a bit PC for my liking—I'm more into the gutter scum of NWA and the Geto Boys, the boot-stomping anger of Public Enemy and Ice Cube, and the nonsense of Kool Keith, so these songs are a bit light from that perspective. I guess you could say that Reality Serum are more related to PM Dawn—remember them? (CD)-**chuck.foster**

**Regret** "Misery Brigade" *(Organized Crime, POB 213, Brookfield, IL 60513).* Like much of the stuff on Organized Crime, Regret has an older feel to it. It screams of the early '90s, when bands like Undertow, Struggle, Unbroken and Mean Season were coming out of labels like New Age Records. We didn't have Metalcore yet, but we had bands like Integrity and Rorschach that were playing with elements of it. This six-track EP, featuring ex-members of Holding On, is doing just that, clinging to a classic sound that never goes bad. While in truth, this is no *Cutting Away*, it instantly reminds me of that time and the Undertow/Unbroken tour that came through the East Coast in like 1992. (CD)-**Myk**

**Rezurex** "Beyond the Grave" *(Fiend Force GbR, inh.: Thorsten Wilms/Jonas Nitzche, Archenholzstr.38, 22117 Hamburg, Germany).* You know, I really liked Daniel de Leon's earliest band, The Insaints—an innovative tour-de-force of feminist offensiveness. Unfortunately, he's now jumped on the current bandwagon flavor of the day (remember when Ska was the rage?) playing bland Psychobilly while singing in a bad Dave Vanian impression. Big fucking yawn. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

**Ribzy** "'81-'85 Recordings" *(Vinehell, POB 36131 San Jose, CA 95158).* Ribzy is one of those bands you wish you'd seen in their heyday, but for some reason or another your mom never shat you out in time to check 'em out live. Having shared the stage with bands like Black Flag, Flipper, the Circle Jerks, DOA and the Dead Kennedys, this group of guys helped to embody the '80s Hardcore movement through their own rendition of gritty punk angst and bottled-up rage. There's a strong sense of disillusionment and recklessness on this disc, with enough intensity to allow the band's music stand the test of time. Fans of Minor Threat, you know what to do. (CD)-**Manic**

**Rifu** "Bombs For Food, Mines For Freedom" *(Go Kart, POB 20, Prince Street Station, New York, NY 10012).* Okay, in Rifu's music I hear BGK, Discharge and Screamo vocals. Some of the music even veers into Screamo territory. Unlike every other Screamo CD I hear, it doesn't make me cringe. Actually, this album doesn't make me do much of anything. For all the throat-tearing and incessant rhythmic pounding, Rifu is pretty damn boring. The lefty political lyrics aren't all that interesting, either. Ever shrug and say, "Eh..."? That's where I am right now. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

**River City Tanlines** "I'm Your Negative" *(Dirtnap, 2615 SE Clinton St., Portland, OR 97202).* Lately my meandering emotional status has unsettlingly veered from hopeless melancholic introspection to seething anger-wrecked tumult. I have not a clue as to the reason behind these physically exhausting mood swings (a secret change of ingredients in my favorite beer perhaps?), but I do know that the River City Tanlines have provided me with a sudden burst of tingly insurmountable joy. *I'm Your Negative* is the euphoric, heart-stopping essence of Rock n' Roll snugly wrapped in a sugary

sweet quilt of Power Pop resplendence and abundantly splashed with a rhythmically delicious topping. Alicja Trout's sassy schoolgirl vocals are perfectly and energetically complemented by her uncanny ability to exorcise golden demons out of the guitar, all the while firmly reiterating my belief that Miss Trout is the premier singer/songwriter/musician of the millennial era. Terrence Bishop skillfully flicks the taut strings of his bass as if he were Picasso corrupting a blank canvas with a vibrant array of dazzling bright colors. J. Ferrel Bonds II intricately lays waste to his drumkit like a maddog demolitions expert exuberantly relishing the precisely paced explosion to come. River City Tanlines obviously love their calling… the proof is in the music. (CD)**-Moser**

**River City High** "Not Enough Saturday Nights" *(Takeover, 1810 14th St., Suite 210, Santa Monica, CA 90404).* Well, guitarist Mark Avery is still wearing that ridiculous cowboy hat, but that's not to say that River City High is still the same band they were from their Doghouse days. With their second full-length on a new label the band really created a feel-good record; they dropped their late '90's Emo/Rock sound for a full on Rock n' Roll onslaught. The guitars are turned up to 11 on *Not Enough Saturday Nights*, and are reminiscent of the latest Explosion or even Donnas record. River City High's songwriting is superb, and this new disc has some of the cleanest production I've heard this year, complete with Radio Rock cowbell and tambourine parts. Almost every track here could be released as a single, and it would be a shame if this record doesn't get the exposure it deserves. (CD)**-Schneider**

**Rob Crow** "Living Well" *(Temporary Residence Ltd, POB 60097, Brooklyn, NY 11206).* I've been a Rob Crow fan for a long time, since the Heavy Vegetable/Thingy days. Both bands featured unique, heavily melodic music with harmonizing male and female vocals. But, even before that, Crow was singing "alohas" on Drive like Jehu's *Yank Crime*. Rob's current band, Pinback, is more of a quirky, melodic, laid back Indie Rock band. Rob's new solo album is a good mix of songs that could have been Pinback or Thingy songs, or possibly even found on a Beck album. (CD)**-Mr. Noiz**

**SSSP** "Skinheads Still Scare People" *(Koi, 18600 South Parkview #1836, Houston, TX 77084).* SSSP, aka Skinheads Still Scare People, is the brainchild of Mike Delorenzo and Vinnie Value, two New York Hardcore legends, who you may better know from their time spent in bands such as Kill Your Idols, Warzone, CR and Celebrity Murders, to name a few. This is pure NYHC created by two good friends who felt the spirit of the early Lower East Side scene was sorely missing from today's music. Featured on this EP are four of the toughest, hardest-hitting old-school Hardcore anthems I've heard since, well, since Revelation consistently put out Hardcore records. Rumor has it that with the recent demise of Kill Your Idols, there might even be a full-length in the works. Let's hope. (7")**-McClernon**

**Scars of Tomorrow** "The Failure In Drowning" *(Victory, 346 North Justine, Suite 504, Chicago, IL 60607).* Imagine a band like Killswitch Engage with all their parts and breakdowns, but when it came to do the big clean vocal breakdown, the singer did his absolute best to avoid the clean parts and jump back into the gruff. That is what happens all the time with Scars. Mike Milford does his very best to sing as little as possible. He doesn't avoid it entirely, but there are parts that you fully expect clean vocals and you hear Mike fight his way back into a growl. It is an interesting divergence from the norm of today and really emphasizes the band's heavy elements. Scars of Tomorrow is the band you needed the last time you said to yourself, "Wow, I would like this band if not for the gay parts." Here, for the most part, you're left with the more brutal elements of the songs. Scars maintains many of the melodic parts of the current scene, but mostly when they don't affect the vocals, or they just get screamed over. This band manages to straddle a line between classic Hardcore and modern Metalcore. (CD)**-Myk**

**Shaun Kama and The Kings of the Wild Frontier** "Dear Scarecrow" *(Boston Krown Label, POB 259, Woodland Hills, CA 91365).* In the 1990s, Shaun Kama fronted my absolute most favorite California Punk band at the time, Damnation. Mr. Kama has since shed his Punk skin and recently corralled a new gang of musical desperados, steering them into spiritually corrupt hellfire Country n' Western territory where lost souls aimlessly wander throughout a surreal desert landscape strewn with cow skulls, tumbleweeds, cactus, scorpions, vultures, and jagged demon-claw canyons. Shaun's somber, weather-beaten voice casts an appearance of a crazed outlaw killer roaming the back roads of Arizona in a classic Cadillac convertible seeking nubile flesh to mutilate and warm blood to spill. The musical accompaniment is all-at-once eerie, bewitching, sinful, swaggering, dark, mysterious, and ultimately captivating, at times incorporating tempestuous elements of Jazz, Rockabilly, Surf, and Spaghetti Western. I'm thinking Johnny Cash and Chris Isaak slinging musical hash in a roadside diner on the outskirts of Hell. Stand-out tracks include "Lost Lonely Road," "Searching For Atlantis," "Muerte Y El Diablo," "Frostbite Heart," "The Strangest Thing," "Beware," and "Ghosts Of The Twilight Storm." One listen to *Dear Scarecrow*, and you'll be on your way to perdition in a heartbeat. (CD)**-Moser**

**She Keeps Bees** "Minisink Hotel" *(myspace.com/shekeepsbees).* Rarely does a recording hit me so viscerally. She Keeps Bees is essentially a one-woman show by Brooklyn-based indie singer/songwriter, Jessica Larabee, whose ethereal, maternal voice is supported by foot tapping acoustic rhythms and sparse instrumentation. These10 songs each stand on their own, and collectively, flow fluidly from start to finish. It sounds like the anticipation of eternal relief from the pain and suffering that life has scarred us with as we take our final journey across the valley, guided by the heavenly voice to the gates at the kingdom of heaven. This is beautiful. (CD)**-Thomson**

**Shook Ones** "Facetious Folly Feat" *(Revelation, POB 5232, Huntington Beach, CA 92615-5232). Facetious Folly Feat* is the best thing Revelation has released in ages, and will easily make my Top Ten for the year. Laying claim to the throne vacated by Kid Dynamite and Lifetime (well I guess not Lifetime, since they reformed and all), Shook Ones play a vicious brand of melodic Hardcore that will have people dancing hard in no time. Hailing from Bellingham, Washington, Shook Ones seemingly came out of nowhere and are well on their way to becoming one of the premier Punk bands of the present. I've been waiting for the release of this record for some time, and it does not disappoint. The vocals are scarily similar to both Ari and Jason (of Lifetime and Kid Dynamite, respectively) and musically they borrow heavily from the Dan Yemin school of thought, but they also incorporate the Punk Rock aspects of legends Black Flag, which separates Shook Ones from the pack. Take it from me, these Seattle transplants are gonna be huge. (CD)**-McClernon**

**Shook Ones** "Facetious Folly Feat" *(Revelation, POB 5232, Huntington Beach, CA 92615).* Like a sonically charged freight train heading for a cataclysmic collision with a petrol tanker, Shook Ones have managed to put together an album that will more than likely blow the common listener clean out of his boots, leaving only a heap of smoldering ash behind. The songs here are largely uptempo and they all bleed into each other, making for a buzz saw attack that never gives out. Pardon the cliché, but *Facetious Folly Feat* is truly a great album from start-to-finish. (CD)**-Manic**

**Shook Ones** "Facetious Folly Feat" *(Revelation, POB 5232, Huntington Beach, CA 92615-5232).* These guys kind of remind me of Rancid minus the Ska influence and some growling vocals. I'm not so sure that I like this record. The vocals are too monotone, and there's even a song without drums—possibly just guitars and vocals—but it doesn't work. (CD)-**Mr. Noiz**

**Sick On the Bus** "Go to Hell" *(SOS, POB 3017, Corona, CA 92878).* Sick On the Bus is a side project that eventually turned into a full-time band consisting of members of the Varukers, one of the best UK anarcho-punk bands of recent memory. Sick On the Bus are a little less crusty and thrashy, but just fast as fuck Punk Rock that's as good, if not better than the Varukers. I believe that *Go to Hell* is in fact a re-issue (not that I'd know going by the minimal liner notes), so if you already own it, this release is not necessary to add to your collection. However, if you're a fan of the Varukers and getting drunk and high and putting your head through a wall is your cup of tea, it might be worth your lunch money, kiddo. (CD)-**McClernon**

**Slumber Party** "Musik" *(Kill Rock Stars, 120 NE State Ave. PMB418, Olympia, WA 98506).* An all-girl Krautrock-infused band from Detroit—sounds too good to be true, right? Fortunately for me, it's not. Lead by multi-instrumentalist Aliccia Berg, the four fembots of Slumber Party inject *Autobahn* Kraftwerk with Suicide drone. The trance-inducing organs of Stereolab drive Byrds-like Folk into another dimension. At times it's like the Velvet Underground led by Maureen Tucker and Nico instead of Lou and John. Kim Fowley named the band, yet somehow they avoid being one of his gimmicks, for which they deserve extra points. The best part of this band, for me at least, is the assertion of feminism without the relinquishing of girldom. Very attractive. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

**Sparrows Swarm and Sing** "Untitled Two" *(The Perpetual Motion Machine, POB 657, Hamilton, VA 20159).* Building on layers of dense droning sounds and serene string arrangements that eventually culminate in massive crescendos, Sparrows Swarm and Sing bring forth, over the course of three tracks spanning nearly a half hour, one of the most pleasing offerings in the current Post-Rock explosion. Quite simply, if you're a fan of stuff like Godspeed! You Black Emperor and *Von* era Sigur Ros, you need to check this record out. *Untitled Two* will relax you with its haunting structures, but it will also shake you out of your haze with parts that can only be described as explosive. (CD)-**Andriani**

**Starflyer 59** "My Island" *(Tooth & Nail, www.toothandnail.com).* STOP! STOP! It seems as if there's this current crop of bands that would have be riding the Emo train to success a few years prior, but who are now jocking this retro wannabe Joy Division trend, and I, for one, never want to hear it again. What made Post-Punk bands like Joy Division so special was that they were able to make sincere, emotional music in what was essentially Pop structures, but played in minor chords. After hearing this abomination I'll be arranging for a lobotomy. (CD)-**Andriani**

**The Static Age** "Blank Screens" *(Reignition, www.reignition.com).* So apparently the guy behind the Static Age, Andrew Paley, thinks that by swiping Cure riffs and making mildly ethereal music, he'll somehow become Robert Smith. Well, sorry Andrew, but The Cure's music was much more substantive than that. The Static Age belongs in the same realm as acts like Dashboard Confessional—it's the self-absorbed angst of the modern MTV generation. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

**Stemm** "Songs For the Incurable Heart" *(I Scream, POB 46608, Los Angeles, CA 90046).* Stemm have a very Pantera-like sound, which isn't a bad thing, but they don't have the Dimebag guitar solos quite down. One thing I don't like are the occasional "radio friendly" parts mixed in with the high octane Metal. (CD)-**Mr. Noiz**

**Stolen Babies** "There Be Squabbles Ahead" *(No Comment, POB 1942 Beverly Hills, CA 90213).* Carnival music, with an emphasis on vocals that are as shrill as they are mind numbing. Suppose you were to stick a cat in a blender and record the cries of pain as they erupted from deep within its bowels— that's just what these vocals sound like. I never liked the circus but this CD sounds like the bands' live gigs come complete with a rollercoaster that runs through a freak show tent wherein dirty carnies await to mount you and fuck your brains out. Will there be popcorn? Who knows? One thing is for certain: this band is frightfully terrible. (CD)-**Manic**

**Street Dogs** "Fading American Dream" *(DRT Entertainment, 45 W. 21 St., New York, NY 10010).* The Street Dogs, featuring former Dropkick Murphys vocalist Mike McColgan, are back with their third full-length and unquestionably their best to date. *Fading American Dream* encompasses everything that made *Do or Die* classic: Mike's distinct Boston Irish vocals, genuine lyrics about growing up as a working-class member of society that no longer recognizes the needs of the blue-collar worker, all sung to the backdrop of catchy as hell Punk Rock ala the Clash. Don't be confused, this is not a Dropkick Murphys nor *Do or Die* clone; far from it. *Fading American Dream* simply harnesses the same energy that made that record so great. Street Dogs are more heavily influenced by the classic Punk sound than the Irish tendencies of Dropkick Murphys , and I think it works in their favor in the case of *Fading American Dream.* The record focuses heavily on the war times this country is involved in and the fact that McColgan is a war vet doesn't hurt his credibility from a lyricist's standpoint either. While Street Punk and straight-up Punk Rock often times gets labeled as "dumb" music played by untalented musicians, this can not be said of the Street Dogs, who contradict those statements tenfold. The Street Dogs will renew your hope in blue-collar Punk Rock.. (CD)-**McClernon**

**Subhumans** "New Dark Age Parade" *(Alternative Tentacles, POB 419092, San Francisco, CA 94141-9092).* Not to be confused with the UK Subhumans, these Subhumans hail from north of the border, and, along with DOA, were one of the first Punk bands ever to come out of Canada. The truth is, from the late '70s to the very early '80s, few Punk bands anywhere were making as great a noise as the Subhumans were. *New Dark Age Parade* marks a seminal moment in the band's career, as it's the first new material written by the original members in 24 years! And better yet, it seems the band hasn't missed a beat, as *New Dark Age Parade* is an excellent Punk Rock record, filled with all the balls and chops the members incorporated in theirs songs over two decades ago. It's amazing how some bands can stand the test of time, and the Subhumans most certainly have. This band's old material is timeless, and I continue to listen to it to this day, so this new material is almost a bonus for me. (CD)-**McClernon**

**Suburban Lockdown** "Locked In" *(Steel Capped, www.steelcappedrecords.com).* Suburban Lockdown play a harder brand of Street Punk than I'm accustomed to hearing these days. This is a style typically played by bands of the Punk Core roster, though it might be a notch or two below that label's usual quality. Think American Oi! styled bands such as The Bruisers, One Man Riot and The Virus, and you'll begin to get an idea what these leather-clad lads are all about. (CD)-**McClernon**

**Summer Hymns** "Backward Masks" *(Misra, 1405 Broadmoor Drive, Austin, TX 78723).* Hey, are you in the mood for some mellow Indie Folk? That's funny—me neither! As I write this, I'm on the third song and it sounds exactly like the first two, i.e., nasal vocals whining drippy love lyrics, acoustic strumming, lazy rhythm section, songs that go on for way too long... especially when you've heard three good stopping points already and you're wondering why they keep going. Wow, this third song's different—it ends in a crescendo of fuzz. Fourth song? Same as the others. I don't have the right haircut or retro clothing for this disc. (CD)**-chuck.foster**

**Sybarite** "Cut Out Shape" *(Temporary Residence, 7 West 22nd St., Fl 4, New York, NY 10010).* Sybarite = overly complex, electronically driven "composed" mostly instrumental (some female vocal) music for the Tortoise or "soundtrack to nothing" crowd. (CD)**-chuck.foster**

**Teenage Harlets** "Up the Fixx" *(Springman, POB 2043, Cupertino, CA 95015).* I'm always up for a shitty Garage band. In this case, I'm using "shitty" in the most endearing way possible. The Teenage Harlets attack trebly '60's riffs with a Punk mindset that's missing from most recent Garage Punk. A lot of bands these days are more into suits, haircuts and vintage equipment—trying to relive an era long gone. These San Francisco scumbags don't really give a shit about that stuff—this is what they're into, this is how they play Rock n' Roll, and if you don't like it, leave. It's the same mentality that drives Billy Childish and directed the earliest Dwarves recordings. Does it matter that every song sounds like a song on *Nuggets*? No, not really—it's fuckin' Rock n' Roll! (CD)**-chuck.foster**

**Terra Diablo** *(www.nocturnal-records.com).* From yonder Scotland across the sea, Terra Diablo deliver a resounding shimmer of Alt-Rock/Shoegazer sounds that overwhelmingly epitomize the joyous splendor of life in all of its fluttering topsy-turvy sweetness. The 12 majestic, dazzling, melody-driven songs vibrantly erupting from this disc indicate a deep-rooted passion for creating music that swells from the heart and wistfully caresses absolutely everything within hearing range. It's a supernova explosion of sonic ingenuity that brings to mind Swervedriver, Foo Fighters, and Coldplay cresting on a wave of opiate euphoria with a twist of dreamy melancholic grandeur. Indeed, Terra Diablo have graciously given humankind a radiant musical experience that indelibly touches the soul and leaves the listener elated and breathless. (CD)**-Moser**

**Things Fall Apart** "We Are All..." *(Crustacean, POB 829, Madison, WI 53701-0829).* Holy shit! Easily taking Best Surprise of the Issue for me, this four-song EP is like nothing I've heard in years. Things Fall Apart ride the fine line between Hardcore/Punk and what some would refer to it as Metal, but I attribute it more to the early '90's version of what Emo was originally meant to sound like, taking cues from bands like Frail, Policy of 3 and Elements of Need. This EP rages like a motherfucker and I'm loving every second of it. Seriously, I can not approve of this record enough. DIY as fuck to boot. (CD)**-McClernon**

**Tim Barry** "Rivanna Junction" *(Suburban Home, POB 40757, Denver, CO 80204).* If you live in a closet, this is Tim from Avail doing his solo acoustic songs. This is his second release, and he's soon to have a DVD out as well. If you're looking for acoustic Avail songs, this is not for you. Tim shows his true Southern roots with this group of songs; I can picture him sitting on his porch with his acoustic guitar, singing for all to hear. Sit around by a camp fire with a cooler of beer and just listen. If you know anything about Tim, he loves to hop trains and travel all over the country. He's the modern day hobo, and nothing gives him more pleasure than the train life and his family. All that comes out in what you could argue is his most personal work. The lyrics are fantasy (or at least **some** are), but they're so heartfelt you could picture him writing in them a box car in the middle of Nebraska or Idaho. No, it isn't Avail—in some ways it's more powerful, but with the exception of Tim's physical body, one has nothing to do with the other. This is Bob Dylan more than it's Punk Rock. (CD)**-Myk**

**Today Forever** "The New Pathetic" *(Strike First, www.strikefirstrecords.com).* There are tolerable moments aplenty on this record, but all too often Today Forever broach their brisk Hardcore assault to bring much maligned Metal generica and pop sheen to the fore. The end result is a formula far removed from the origins of that thing called Punk. Unfortunate to say the least, but all the more discouraging because there are moments where the band brings some full on straight-forward Hardcore to the table that is actually pretty solid. (CD)**-Ramek**

**Torture** "Storm Alert" *(Escapi, www.escapimusic.com).* There's actually quite a story behind this CD. Torture came into existence in El Paso, Texas, in 1986. They released the legendary *Terror Kingdom* EP in 1987. Europe caught on, but the US remained in the dark. Finally, the band released *Storm Alert* in the UK in 1989, which gained a cult following, but never made it to the States. In the meantime, the band parted ways, until deciding to reunite in 2004. Finally, this brutal Thrash Metal classic sees the light of day on its native shores. The songs lie somewhere between Slayer, Celtic Frost and Venom, each track a man on fire, running through the woods, setting everything he touches aflame. AND there's a song about *Silent Night, Deadly Night.* Hell yeah! (CD)**-chuck.foster**

**Turn Me On Dead Man** "Technicolour Mother" *(Alternative Tentacles, POB 419092, San Francisco, CA 94141).* Glam Rock collides with Space Rock in a supernova of noxious gas. Marc Bolan rides shotgun in a small starcruiser alongside Dave Brock and Tony Iommi. George Martin produces the Melvins on Saturn and broadcasts the session to Earth via Andromeda. Aliens know how to rock, too. (CD)**-chuck.foster**

**Twelve Tribes** "Midwest Pandemic" *(Ferret, 258 Livingston Ave., New Brunswick, NJ 08901).* Bands have gotten so complicated over the last couple of years. Time signatures that don't make any sense, vocals that don't match up with the music, and drumming that doesn't necessarily keep time are just some of the things a listener needs to deal with when putting on a new CD. Twelve Tribes is one of the bands that has all of the above. Not **all** the time mind you, but it **does** happen. These guys are seeming disciples of Dillinger Escape Plan, and also Starkweather to some degree. The technical guitar playing on this album is something else, but to hear it you must fight through the vocals and the inherent noise of the song writing. The vocals are powerful and in your face—as Hardcore should be—but there's just so much activity and one can only focus on one part at a time. The drumming is another aspect that needs full attention at one point or another. One could conceivable listen to this album three or four times before really hearing everything. It's a textbook example of the term Math Rock, but it's delivered with a fervor that many of the other bands don't have. I haven't seen the band live, but I picture it either being brilliant beyond belief if played perfectly or being an absolute disaster of a mess if not exactly on; it's **that** precise. (CD)**-Myk**

**Two Dollar Guitar** "The Wear and Tear of Fear: A Lover's Discourse" *(Smells Like, POB 6179, Hoboken, NJ 07030).* It seems like ages ago since I was first introduced to Two Dollar Guitar, back when Sonic Youth's Steve Shelley's label Smells Like Records first started issuing records from some of the most off-beat, hidden gems in the world of Indie Rock—everything from Blonde Redhead, Dump and Sentridoh to Jad Fair's eccentric Red Mosquito project. Tim Foljahn's unique blend of Folk, Country and subtle experimental Indie Rock has found a home nicely on the label's roster from the outset. Two Dollar Guitar's latest full-length is much more minimal in terms of composition, and subsequently *The Wear and Tear of Fear: A Lover's Discourse* has become Foljahn's most realized work to date. The songs have a Lee Hazelwood vibe to them but are mixed with vocal stylings that are similar to what Michael Gira has been doing these days with his Angels of Light project. At times, I even hear vague similarities to a more traditionally-structured Jandek. Foljahn has masterfully gotten the record to move along in a stealthy manner, in turn making *The Wear and Tear of Fear: A Lover's Discourse* a soothing experience. Not to say that what's heard isn't memorable; quite the contrary, as the vocal melodies and minimal guitar chords are just what the doctor ordered for the songs. From time to time droning keyboards and looping effects are thrown into the mix, but instead of becoming distracting, the sounds only further complement the rather eerie, Backwoods Folk of Two Dollar Guitar. With the success of many Folk-infused artists today, it's a wonder that Two Dollar Guitar is still an obscure fixture in the world of independent music, though with this new effort one can only hope that will change. (CD)**-Andriani**

**The Unabombers** "On The Go" *(Unabombers, www.myspace.com/unabombersband).* Like the breath of smoke wafting from the dynamite that just exploded in your mailbox, the Unabombers blast out of Norfolk, Virginia, ready to grab the world by the throat and force a couple beers down its suffocating mouth. Steve Baise—yes, the Candy Snatchers cohort—recorded this 13-song scorcher and it shows. Once in a while you get a CD that could have been a tasty slab of vinyl in 1982—here's one of 'em. If you really wanna hear the Unabombers, though, you gotta catch 'em live. I have—it was quite explosive. (CD)**-chuck.foster**

**Under Byen** "Samme Stof Som Stof" *(Paper Bag, www.paperbagrecords.com).* In an era where it seems as if everything has already been done, an original band is really hard to come by. In fact, I listen to a few hundred releases a year from bands in different genres, and probably only a handful earn the label "original." Well, with Under Byen's third album, *Samme Stof Som Stof,* you can add another one to that short list. Mixing together orchestral elements of Rachel's with the droning and lush vocal arrangements of Sigur Ros—and oddly enough, some of the synth pop of Mates of State—Sweden's Under Byen creates music that is undeniably their own. The band experiments with structures and various textures, but they definitely don't create headcase music, as there's a bizarre underlying Pop vibe to the songs. If you dig any of the aforementioned bands but want to hear an act that doesn't sound exactly like them, you definitely need to check out Under Byen. (CD)**-Andriani**

**Unique Chique** "Ethica" *(Loose Tooth, 1426 W. Balmoral #2, Chicago, IL 60647).* Unique Chique harken back to a time when bands like Capn' Jazz, Braid and The Promise Ring were at the top of their game. While I don't enjoy Unique Chique as much just yet, I think at some point they could reach that level. The quartet blends elements of Midwest Rock, Indie Rock and Brit Rock effortlessly, and when coupled with some seriously bitter views towards a nasty break-up (which is the case running through the seven songs present here), *Ethica* makes for quite a tasty, semi-depressing yet vindicating treat. (CD)**-McClernon**

**Upstab** "With Report" *(Way Back When, Taskinlaan 9, 2361 XM Warmond, Holland).* The second installment of raucous distort-core from Cleveland's Upstab is easily as intense and unforgiving as their first. In other words, it fucking rips. That infamous rabble rouser Chris Erba, formerly of H-100s/Ruiners fame, offers more of his malevolent, inhuman vocal retching to the backdrop of a raucous, catchy riff onslaught which borrows liberally from traditional Japanese Hardcore and American Punk/Hardcore bile. Semi-coherent down-an-out jabbering is Erba's MO, an amalgam of off-kilter rhetoric and psychotic ramblings not soon forgotten. It is a shame that Upstab called it quits recently because they were one of the best bands going. Memorable tunes, nonexistent production, and a vicious delivery. (7")**-Ramek**

**V/A** "A Life Less Lived: The Gothic Box" *(Rhino, 3400 W. Olive Ave., Burbank, CA 91505).* The true Goth scene was one I never proposed to be a part of. Growing up, I didn't really get the downtrodden tone of the music or what I perceived as the "silly" look of people like Robert Smith or Morrissey. I was more interested in ripping guitars and pointing my finger and saying, "Go!" As I've gotten older and seen more things and problems in the world, the music makes more sense to me. I still think some of the looks are ridiculous, but musically and lyrically, I'm at a new and more understanding place. So, for someone like myself, this box is one of the best things ever. This contains tracks by all the essential building blocks of the scene including Siouxsie, Lords of the New Church, Christian Death, Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds, and Echo and the Bunnymen among the three CD set. Add to that a DVD of videos that includes great tracks like Bauhaus' "Bela Lugosi's Dead" and you have a must own collection of one of the most underground styles of music ever. The set contains a total of 53 songs, and the DVD is about 70 minutes long. I've never even heard of half these groups, and if nothing else I prided myself on knowing the underground whether I liked the music or not. Add to that the fantastic book included with this set and the cool leather corset cover, and you have another brilliant Rhino reissue that will please old fans and instantly attract a new generation of fans to the Gothic world. The only issue I have with this whole box concerns Ministry. While I agree they belong here, they missed the mark with the track they picked for the CD ("So What") and the track on the DVD ("Stigmata"). Both of these songs are from the band's better-known Metal days. For this set, they should have stuck to the Minstry's Wax Trax releases, when they truly were a Goth band, but that's a minor complaint at best. (CD Box)**-Myk**

**V/A** "American Hardcore: The History of America Punk Rock 1980-1986" *(Rhino, 3400 W. Olive Ave., Burbank, CA 91505).* Okay, this is quick and painless. This might be the greatest soundtrack to a film ever. There have been other great Punk soundtracks and great films, but this CD is fucking brilliant. There are 26 artists and the CD is 38 minutes long. Even if you have every song on this CD, I can't seen someone not wanting this. Black Flag, Minor Threat, 7 Seconds, Bad Brains, Cro- Mags, Negative Approach and Jerry's Kids...and I'm not even half way through the list there. This is absolutely ridiculous in regards to picking your 25 favorite bands and putting them together on one CD. I couldn't describe how good this really is and live up to what you'll get by listening to it yourself. (CD)**-Myk**

**V/A** "American Hardcore: The History of American Punk Rock1980-1986" *(Rhino, 3400 W. Olive Ave., Burbank, CA 91505).* I didn't like the film *American Hardcore*, but the soundtrack to that misguided debacle provides a pleasing (if incomplete) snapshot of the American Hardcore scene of the

early-to-mid 1980s. Ear-rending staples like Black Flag's "Nervous Breakdown," Minor Threat's "Filler," Bad Brains' "Pay to Cum," Negative Approach's "Friend or Foe," and SSD's "Boiling Point" are accounted for, of course, and it is more than likely that these ragers will already be quite familiar to the listener. Some comparatively obscure tracks also surface here, however, like the "genre-defining" "Out of Vogue" by Southern California's Middle Class, the rollicking "I Was A Teenage Fuckup" by the criminally underrated Texas Hardcore outfit Really Red, and the aural mind fuck that is Flipper's "Ha Ha Ha." Excellent selections from Void, Die Kreuzen, Articles of Faith, Jerry's Kids, and MDC round the effort out nicely (an '82 demo version of the Cro-Mags' "We Gotta Know" doesn't hurt, either). It would be a stretch to call this an especially cohesive overview, but as a concise, reasonably priced compilation, this effort proves its relative worth. (CD)-**Ramek**

**V/A** "Chicago Punk Cuts" *(Thick, www.thickrecords.com).* This 14 track compilation is a sort of documentation of what's currently going on in a piece of the Chicago scene. Enclosed in here are all new and exclusive tracks from notable bands such as The Killing Tree (which is Todd from Rise Against's other band), Cougars, The Methadones, Colossal and Horace Pinker, as well as my favorites The Bomb (Jeff Pezzati's of Naked Raygun latest act), and new act Explode and Make Up, featuring ex-members of 88 Fingers Louie, who play a furious brand of old school Hardcore that I can't wait to hear more of. All in all, it seems like a very exciting time to be living in the Windy City. (CD)-**McClernon**

**V/A** "Everybody Loves. Antiseen: A Loving Tribute to the Boys From Brutalsville" *(TKO, 8941 Atlanta Ave. #505, Huntington Beach, CA 92646)*. Woo-wee, what we have here is a double-barreled shotgun blast tribute to the ugliest, meanest, and nastiest band that's ever rattled and rocked the earth: Antiseen! This two-disc, 57-track musical monster is a savage ass-stomping whirlwind of rabid, demented sounds that's sure to bring out the dirty, mangy, scum-lovin' heathen in all y'all pretty damn quick. Some of the loud, rowdy, and revolting sonic shitkickers paying whiskey-soaked homage to Antiseen on this here set include Limecell, Hank III, The Loose Skrews, Hellstomper, The Deviltones, Rancid Vat, The Boils, The Hammercocks, Texas Terri Bomb, Jeff Dahl, The Tunnel Rats, Zeke, Hammerlock, The Bulemics, The Hookers, and Chaos UK. Of course, there's heaps more to be heard raising a hellfire ruckus on these dastardly twin discs, so I suggest ya cook up a batch of possum stew, break out a jug of homebrewed mash, and pay your respects to the Boys from Brutalsville until the cows come home. (CD)-**Moser**

**V/A** "Full Breach Kicks CD Sampler" *(Full Breach Kicks, 2060 N. California Ave., Chicago, IL 60647)*. As with the roster of any label, there's some great stuff to be heard on this disc (The Soda Pop Kids, Kevin K, Chaz Matthews/Dimestore Haloes, the Electric Kisses, the Joneses) and some stuff I really could do without. Buy a T-shirt, get the CD for free and decide for yourself. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

**V/A** "Go Kart vs. the Corporate Giant 4" *(Go Kart, POB 20, Prince Street Station, New York, NY 10012)*. I like three bands on this compilation: The Shocker, The Go Faster Nuns and Transmission0. The rest I skipped through while being very annoyed. To be fair, the disc is priced at under four bucks, I'm getting old and crotchety and don't like anything, and you may find your new favorite band in this mess. A six-pack of PBR or this CD? It's your choice. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

**V/A** "Paupers, Peasants, Princes and Kings: The Songs of Bob Dylan" *(Doghouse America, POB 8946, Toledo, OH 43623)*. The only thing more annoying than Bob Dylan's arrogance is a bunch of hipster trendoids emulating Bob Dylan's arrogance. Yeah, okay, I like Bob—at least his first eight albums or so, but do I regard him as "The Greatest American Songwriter" like so many people with more time on their hands than me do? Hell no! Truth be told, I don't CARE who occupies that position. Anyway, as far as I'm concerned, the best Dylan covers I've ever heard were Frankie Valli's, and he did them as an INSULT to Bob—now THAT's Punk Rock! This CD is a collection of hipster Indie worship. I have to admit, though—the Hip Hop version of "All Along the Watchtower" by POS had me laughing my ass off for quite a while. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

**V/A Complete Control / Krum Bums** "Death Can Wait" *(TKO, 8941 Atlanta Ave., Suite 505, Huntington Beach, CA 92646)*. The Thirteenth Floor Elevators kick this CD's ass. The Red Crayola kick this CD's ass. Roky Erickson kicks this CD's ass. The Huns kick this CD's ass. The Dicks kick this CD's ass. The Big Boys kick this CD's ass. The Butthole Surfers kick this CD's ass. Scratch Acid kick this CD's ass. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

**V/A Mass Movement of the Moth / The Catalyst** "Two Thousand and Six Six Six" *(The Perpetual Motion Machine, POB 657, Hamilton, VA 20159)*. Sweet fucking Jesus! This split album between two of the underground's most sonically fresh bands, Mass Movement of the Moth and The Catalyst, is an absolute scorcher. Mass Movement of the Moth wreaks havoc with their wiry, screamy take on dance happy Art Punk. With their synth-driven songs against blasts of chaotic Screamo fury, Mass Movement of the Moth is certain to draw comparisons to An Albatross, but there's definitely something else going on here. To me it's more fun and not as contrived as some of the other bands staking out this creative territory. As much as enjoy their offerings, the band that really takes the cake for me on this disc is The Catalyst whose hypnotic, feedback-laden guitars and pummeling rhythm section mix together the best elements of Grunge, Stoner Rock and Post-Punk. Mix together Unwound, Nirvana and The Melvins—but with a more Hardcore/Screamo upbringing—and what you have is an explosive combination that can nearly contain itself. I hope The Catalyst can keep things together, as they show some great promise. My only gripe with this split is that instead of each band having its own section of songs, the track listing switches back and forth between acts, which really fucks up the flow—to a casual listener it really takes away from brilliance of each band's songs. But, don't let that stop you from picking this up, as *Two Thousand and Six Six Six* is a wonderful introduction to two of the more interesting bands traveling in the American DIY Punk/Hardcore circle these days. (CD)-**Andriani**

**V/A The Prozacs/Johnie 3** "We Should Split" *(Cheapskate, 297 Stoodley Place, Schenectady, NY 12303)*. A great split by two upcoming Pop Punk bands in the scene today. Twelve songs altogether, with each band playing one for one, which at first gets confusing because they sound a bit similar, both going for the snotty Screeching Weasel sound, but focusing on different eras of the band. The Prozacs tend to remind me a bit more of the *Boogada* era: a little faster, a little goofier, but just as good, while Johnie 3 are a little more akin to the *My Brain Hurts/Wiggle* era of Screeching Weasel, which I personally prefer, so I prefer them on this split. Johnie 3 even do their own version of The Queers' "Ben Weasel," though they do an ode to the crankiness of one Christy Darlington, who's not a bad songwriter in his own right, though no Mr. Weasel. (CD)-**McClernon**

**The Varsity Weirdos** "Fly Me Up to the Moon" *(It's Alive, 11411 Hewes St., Orange, CA 92869)*. It seems that It's Alive can do no

wrong. One of the best up and coming Pop Punk labels do it again with Canada's Varsity Weirdos. While the first side of this 7" is very good in the Screeching Weasel/McCrackins vein, it's the second side that absolutely won me over. "Never Liked You Anyway" and "Fly Me Up to the Moon" have a darker air about them, with vocals so snotty and agitated that it just kills me. Catchier than syphilis from a $2 prostitute, the Varsity Weirdos take their Ramones meets Teenage Head Pop Punk sound to the next level on this one, and it's a scorcher. (7")-**McClernon**

**Verbal Abuse** "Rocks Your Liver" *(Malt Soda, POB 7611, Chandler, AZ 85246).* This is a reissue of the album from 1986 featuring all 12 tracks from the album plus a whopping 11 more bonus tracks culled from demos, radio shows and live performances. The bonus tracks are from both this era and songs from their previous release, *American Band*. *Rocks Your Liver* is more of a Crossover type offering than their earlier release, and that turned a lot of people off at the time, but looking back now it's a great addition to bands like Excel, Crumbsuckers, and Gang Green. It was a great era for music, and since this is the first time this album is on CD, it's an occasion for a new generation of kids to hear it. All the kids digging on bands like Municipal Waste and the rest of the modern Thrash era will certainly appreciate the direction of this Verbal Abuse classic. (CD)-**Myk**

**Vice Squad** "Defiant" *(SOS, POB3017, Corona, CA 92878).* I've said it before, and I'll say it again: SOS really needs to stick with re-issues. I'll be the first to admit that while being a huge supporter of the early Street Punk/Oi scene in England, Vice Squad were never one of my favorites. With that in mind, their earlier material was infinitely better than *Defiant*, the band's new album, consisting of all new tunes. *Defiant* sounds like a band trying to capture the energy and sound Vice Squad in part made famous...and not doing such a hot job at it. While I respect them for the contributions they made to Punk, I don't know if they can be excused for this mediocre record. (CD)-**McClernon**

**Vladimirs** "Serpent Girl and Songs to Shed the Skin" *(Blood and Guts, 1176 Ferncliff, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110).* While the Vladimirs are a helluva lot better than yer average Horror Punk band, they still fail to grab me 'cause they sound like the Misfits with wanky lead guitar parts. The Misfits did their thing 25 years ago. It's time for something else. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

**The Wipers** "Is This Real?" *(Jackpot, www.jackpotrecords.com).* I can't even begin to tell you how essential this record is. The debut LP by the seminal Portland Punk band the Wipers, originally released in 1980, is once again back in print on VINYL!! Re-mastered from the original tapes, *Is This Real?* sounds as good as ever. The Wipers, and in particular, *Is This Real?*, goes down in history as one of my favorite records of all time. Seriously, there's not one single below excellent tune on it, with my faves being "Return of the Rat," "D7"( both of which were covered by Nirvana), "Potential Suicide" and "Upfront." For whatever reason though, as excellent as The Wipers were, they never seemed to get the attention they deserved—perhaps due to their location or their melodic sound—while sunnier and more populated locales such as California and New York were hotbeds of musical talent and fashion. I can't show my support for this record enough, and while I own an original pressing of this in my record collection, having a brand new copy of it to wear out is something I'm really looking forward to. (LP)-**McClernon**

**World War IX** "Locked In" *(Elis Eil, www.eliseil.com).* Reminding us all that they're loud and ready to be heard, WWIX return with another "single" to whet our appetites until another full-length comes together. If Black Flag's Greg Ginn had decided to write a Punk Rock Opera a la Pete Townsend or Ray Davies (though "TV Party" came close), it would have been "The Life." "Preteen Supermodel" is lecherous dirty old man spiel channeled through the Angry Samoans and/or the Circle Jerks. I once worked with a chef who went to jail for such things. Seriously. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

**World War IX** "When A Good Time Turns to Shit" *(Elis Eil, www.eliseil.com).* While WWIX's full-length CD, *Panic Attack*, was really good, this two song "single" (keepin' it Hardcore, baby!) does a much better job of capturing the raw, live sound of Brooklyn's finest scumbags. "Intervention," a song from *Panic Attack*, is a Jabbers-esque ditty about having all your friends tell you that you're a drunken asshole—hey, I can relate! The rough recording here gives the song a sharp edge not on the album. "Treasure Hunt," the "B-side," is a *Damaged*-era Black Flag-style serenade to stealing people's prescription pills when they're not looking. Never trust a junkie, right? Heh-heh. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

**XrepresentX** "True at All Costs" (*1981, www.x1981x.com).* When a band like Hatebreed gets huge and some people scream "sellout" at them, what do those kids listen to then? Well, for my money, I would guess they listen to XrepresentX, or at least they **should**. These guys play some serious kickbox style Hardcore. There are well-structured songs about Straight Edge, and every one is written to inspire a full on assault on the crowd. There are huge breakdowns and Between the Buried and Me-style vocals. XrepresentX smacks of the whole Syracuse meets Buffalo Hardcore thing, bringing to mind bands like Another Victim and Earth Crisis. (CD)-**Myk**

**Zatopeks** "Smile or Move" *(It's Alive, 11411 Hewes St., Orange, CA 92869).* The Zatopeks take their three-chord Ramones Punk Rock and expand on it by throwing in some '50's Doo Wop and folk into the mix, with mixed results. The vocals are more in the vein of Frankie Stubbs than Ben Weasel or Joe King, which is a nice touch, but the songs themselves—while above average—aren't as catchy as some of the songs by the band's contemporaries within the genre. A very good record to be sure, but for my money, gimme The Copyrights, The Ergs! or The Leftovers. (7")-**McClernon**

**Zyklon** "Disintegrate" *(Candlelight US, POB 707, Plymouth Meeting, PA 19462). World Ov Worms* was one wicked introduction for a band, especially one people were leery of hearing since it signified the true end of Emperor. *Aeon* was a bit of a sophomore slump for me. It was decent enough, but it paled in comparison to its predecessor and lacked *World Ov Worms*' originality. With the release of *Disintegrate*, there's no denying that Zyklon is one of the premier bands playing heavy music in the world. The band found what it was missing on the last album and built upon it. Samoth's guitar parts are at least on par with his pieces for Emperor, if not better, and better than any other Zyklon offering to date. The symmetry of this lineup is fantastic; the vocals, to the guitar, to the bass to the drumming are preciously constructed for an audio attack that's epic and complete. With contributions from Bard Faust and Trym, this is almost an Emperor reunion, and also points to the possibility that it's Isahn who no longer wants to focus on the classic entity. Whatever the reason, Samoth and company have released an album that will continue its family lineage in Black Metal's hierarchy and start new legends of its own. (CD)-**Myk**

# VIDEO STUFF

## MUSIC

**Sham 69** "Hersham Boys In Concert" *(Music Video Distributors, POB 280, Oaks, PA 19456).* This is really easy to describe; it's a no bullshit look at Sham 69 recorded at the Concorde in Brighton, England in February of 2002. While this isn't a classic era recording, they play all the classics. The lineup features everyone you need to be there, Jimmy and Dave, plus Ian and Matt. The set consists of 21 songs, including an encore of "Borstal Breakout," which was requested by the crowd even though the band had already played it once. The band gets in their political bits in between songs, and they also give some good descriptions of what the songs are about. There are interviews as well that give the background of the band when the songs were written. The stereo 5.1 sound is awesome, and the video is crystal clear. Other songs that you need to see and hear are "If The Kids Are United," "Hersham Boys," "Tell Us the Truth" and "Angels With Dirty Faces." The show clocks in at 74 minutes, but it's some really compelling concert footage and proves that some people can rock no matter how old they get...and some messages never get old. (DVD)-**Myk**

## OTHER COOL STUFF

"The Anna Cabrini Chronicles" *(www.polymorphproductions.com). The Anna Cabrini Chronicles* is a dark, distressing, angst-ridden journey into the harrowing, often taboo, realm of suicide. The film's main character, Anna Cabrini, confesses her suicidal struggles in a diary while chronicling on cassette recorder the disturbingly hopeless events leading to the suicides of three entirely different individuals (a religiously confused young woman with low self-esteem, a middle-aged man unable to come to terms with his homosexual tendencies, and a 12-year-old boy tormented by a bitterly unstable home life). What these poor troubled beings ultimately have in common, though, are the deep-rooted feelings of loneliness, despair, anxiety, and worthlessness that sometimes cause a person to seek self-induced death as a means of escape from life's squall of confusion. If a film could ever truly speak to the soul, *The Anna Cabrini Chronicles* would be the one to grandly do so. It's a visually haunting independent masterpiece with impeccably realistic acting, and it overwhelmingly makes the viewer appreciate the delicate intricacies of life with respect and compassion. (DVD)-**Moser**

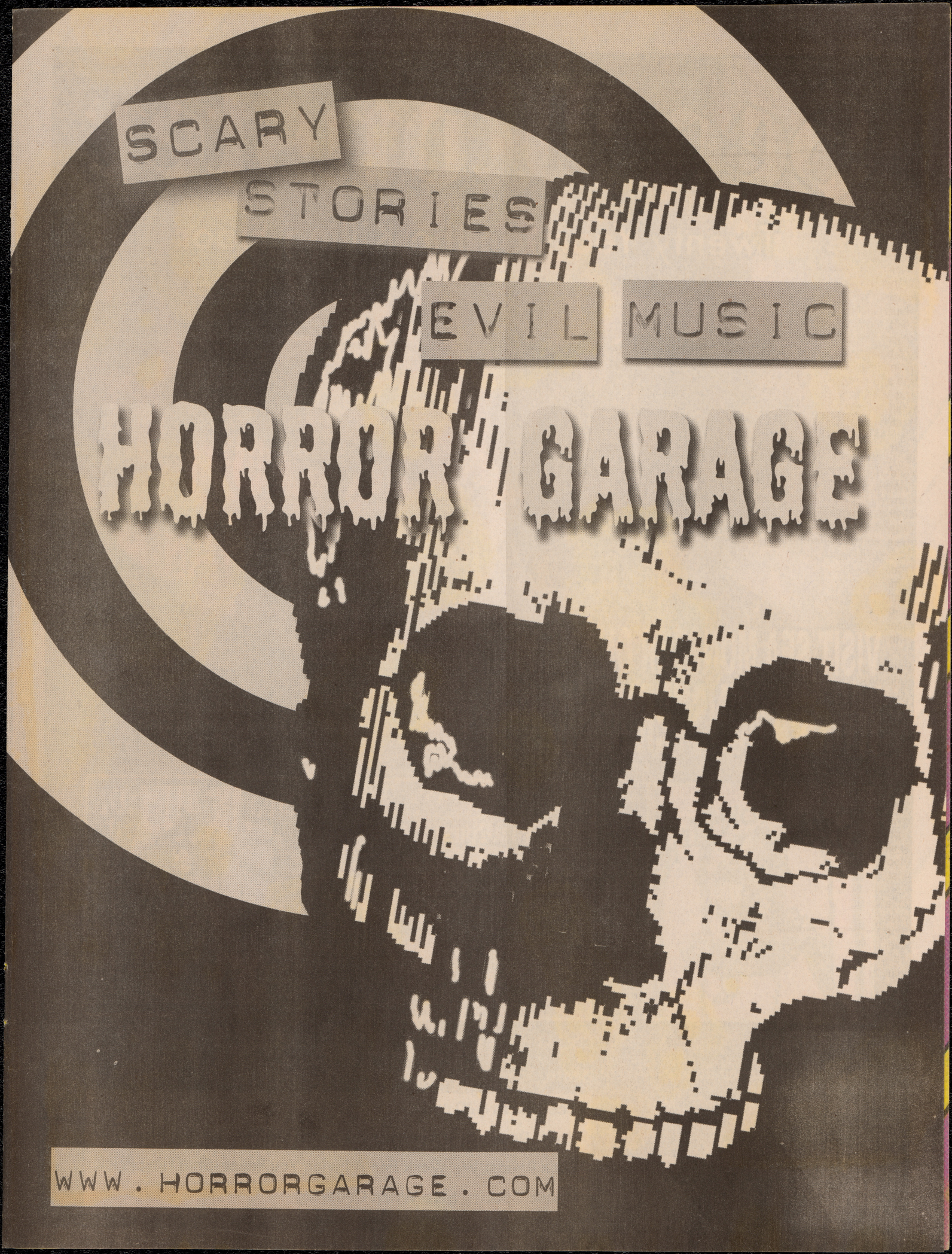
"The Dudesons Movie" *(Rhino, 3400 W. Olive Ave., Burbank, CA 91505).* Fuck *Jackass*, this is the real deal! This is funny in a more real life way; these guys aren't looking for attention the way the *Jackass* crew is, they're just nuts and do things because they are funny and have a habit of taping them. Much of the film is actually old footage that's never been seen over here. You can tell by the length of Jarrpi's hair how old the clip really is. Steve-O and Bam make guest appearances in the film, but at times it's more like hero worship as they both acknowledge that without The Dudesons, there may be no *Jackass*. To give you an idea how fucked up these guys are, Jarrpi, who does the human dartboard stunt, is also missing a finger which he lost wrestling a bear. There is a skit with the human dartboard, where Bam throws the darts with the Bloodhound Gang which is a great start to the film. There is one bit where they bust in one of the guys having sex and he just keeps going; it's hard to tell if the girl noticed or even cared. They showed HP getting ankle surgery as one bit, and there's a great bit with the band Exodus as well. The grand finale is the guys accidentally burning down their own house when a stunt goes wrong—**that's** hardcore. The bonus features include more stunts, the extended version of the Exodus bit, behind the scenes at *Viva La Bam* when the guys were on the show, and Mad Mike vs. the Dudesons. This is brilliant, essential viewing for fans of the original Camp Kill Yourself tapes. (DVD)-**Myk**

"Evil Breed: The Legend of Samhain" *(Lion's Gate, 2700 Colorado Ave., Santa Monica, CA 90404).* Let's face it, when you assemble a cast with Ginger Lynn Allen, Richard Grieco and Jenna Jameson, it's either porn, or has a plot that makes porn look good. Bobbie Phillips (who seems like she's been on every TV show in the last five years), looks to be the acting champ of the film, and Jenna is predictably the gal whose boobs get shown and then she's killed. The story is about a group of American teens and their teacher (Phillips) who take a trip to an old house in the woods. They are warned by a neighbor (Allen) not to go out at night because it's dangerous. It turns out there's an ancient family of mutants (they mutated due to inbreeding) that kill and eat people in the area, and the last member of the family has recently awoken. Jenna plays a camper that the kids come across, and of course later she becomes dinner. The films takes on the more than usual look of a cheap horror flick shot in the woods and reads like a camp film, just with older kids being the ones that get in trouble. The make up on the deformed cannibal is average at best, but some of the blood effects are good. This is one of those films that you see on the rental shelf, and the cover conveys exactly what you're going to see. Pretty girls, decent blood, and a poor plot line that's just a vehicle for the kills. (DVD)-**Myk**

"Hellsing: Ultimate" *(Geneon, 2265 East 220th St., POB 22782, Long Beach, CA 90801).* I saw the original *Hellsing* DVD when it was released several years ago and to be honest, I just thought this was a re-issue. It isn't; it's more like a remake. The storyline is super close, but this is like the adult version of the cartoon. You still have Police Girl and Alucard and the Hellsing group, but everything is souped up a bit. The violence is more graphic and poignant. The sexy female characters have slightly shorter dresses, bigger breasts and much heftier attitudes, and the dark side of the Vampire mythos is that much closer to the Nosferatu storylines. Alucard is nasty as sin, but the story starts with him in a dead heap in a long-forgotten dungeon. He's resurrected when he is found by a young Sir Integra Hellsing. After his rebirth, Alucard becomes the ultimate Vampire hunter, making Blade look like a civilized pansy. If you liked the original *Hellsing,* you'll love this. Vampire fans will all but be mesmerized by this piece, as the anime world is taken by storm. This is the quintessential horror anime this year. (DVD)- **Myk**

"Masters of Horror: Jenifer" *(Anchor Bay, 1699 Stutz Dr., Troy, MI 48084).* Although season two of Masters of Horror is upon us, we're just being graced with the DVD releases of the first season. The episode that I most anticipated was "Jenifer" due to the fact that it was directed by my all time favorite director, Dario Argento. Well, Dario and cohort Steven Weber (of *Wings* fame) did not disappoint. Weber wrote the screenplay and starred in this film based on a story by comic legends Bernie Wrightston and Bruce Jones. This is the perfect horror vignette because it has just enough gore, just enough jumpy scares and just enough beautiful women (whom are mostly naked). It features all the debauchery that gave horror its bad name in the '80s and brings them back. Webber plays a police officer that shoots and kills a man who's trying to decapitate a seemingly beautiful and bound woman. Once Weber gets close and realizes that the woman is either a mutant or an alien because she has the most disfigured face you can imagine. He becomes obsessed with the girl and brings her home, which doesn't sit well with his wife when she finds her for the first time, naked, with her arms around Steven. Moment by moment the characters degrade to primal forms of violence and loss until the inevitable is clear. The direction is amazing (of course), and the story was really well constructed. I had no idea Steven Weber could write. This DVD, as with the rest of those in the series, is packed with extras like an interviews with Dario, Weber and Carrie Anne Fleming (Jenifer) and a great Weber audio commentary, which is great. There's also a making of..., and an interesting piece showing the transformation from written script to film. This is up there with "Cigarette Burns" as the best of the Masters of Horror series. (DVD)-**Myk**

"The Wicker Man" (*Anchor Bay, 1699 Stutz Dr., Troy, MI 48084).* This is one of those legendary cult films, and you either get it or you don't. I have my specific cult film passions, but this is one film that I never felt was fantastic. It's clever and anything with Christopher Lee will tend to be creepy, but I never felt this was fantastic or felt compelled to watch it time and time again. I **did** watch it again here though, and the transfer is excellent. The story is of Police Sergeant Howie (Edward Woodward of *The Equalizer*) going to a small Island to investigate a letter he received from a little girl. She was worried that people around her were going to kill her. When Howie got to the Island, no one admitted to knowing the girl, and that was the most normal thing he found. Weird religions and a dislike for mainlanders were his biggest challenge.... that, and turning down the advances of Britt Eklund. Also in the film was Hammer legend Ingrid Pitt and Lee plays Lord Summerisle, the leader of the island both politically and spiritually, but what their religious practice is the odd thing; it's like no religion Howie was has ever heard of. Howie is sure something odd is going on, but the more he digs the less things make sense, and the more he realizes he's in trouble. Woodward is very good in this role, Lee is a bizarre, almost drug-addled cult leader with weird looking hair and Eklund does what she does best playing a blonde siren up to no good. While from a historic horror standpoint everyone should see this film, but I still can't count myself amount the devotees to this particular cult. *The Wicker Man* is a Lee movie and that's good enough for me, but I'll take his Hammer work prior to this, for the most part. There is an excellent documentary on the disc as a bonus which features actors and production people and a lot of the history of the film, and why it's become so historically important. Given the choice, I would watch this 1000 times before ever seeing the remake starring Nicolas Cage. (DVD)-**Myk**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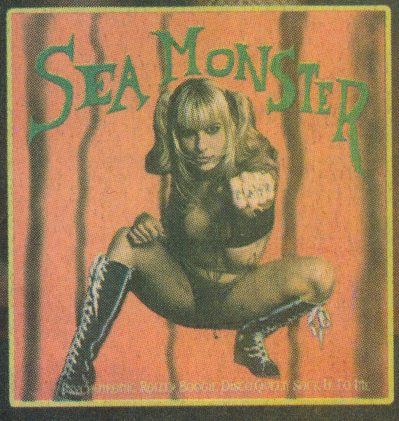


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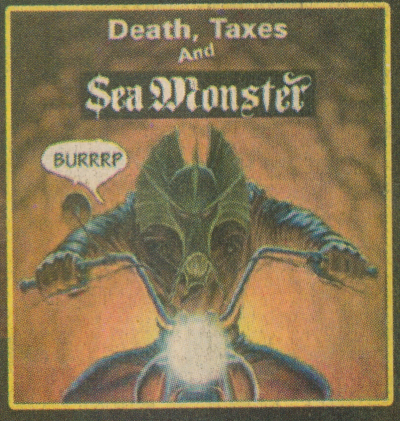


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